

VILLA-LOBOS' *CANÇÕES TÍPICAS BRASILEIRAS* AND THE CREATION OF THE
BRAZILIAN NATIONALIST STYLE

by

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Villa-Lobos' *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* and the Creation of the Brazilian Nationalist Style

The objective of this document is to investigate the development of Heitor Villa-Lobos's nationalist style during the first three decades of the twentieth-century. The song set *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, representative of the style, is used as a case study. It is important to understand the creation of this style because it was the first consolidated example of Brazilian nationalist art music, and especially because of the enormous influence and fame achieved by the composer. His "official" biography is riddled with inaccuracies, and this document is part of a larger process of clarifying the events surrounding the composer's life. For this study, a comparative analysis of his published biographies was executed, and the sources and music in *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* were studied. The results of this investigation support the theory that Villa-Lobos's nationalist style was developed as a consequence of his first trip to Paris in 1923 and that he misdated the composition of many of his earlier nationalist works, as seems to be the case with these songs.

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INTRODUCTION

Brazilian art song after Villa-Lobos has been one of the main vehicles for the expression of Brazilian nationalism in art music. Other twentieth-century musical tendencies such as twelve-tone technique had brief periods of evidence amongst Brazilian composers, but such influences did not play a significant role on the post-Villa-Lobos art song. Even later composers identified largely as universalists, or as Brazilian musicologists tend to call them, independents, frequently reverted to nationalist inspiration when composing art songs.¹

Canções Típicas Brasileiras, a set of originally ten songs by Villa-Lobos, is considered by the scholarship as a milestone of the genre, and it is indeed one of the first works to present musical elements from the three major ethnic groups that formed the nation of Brazil. But despite the acclamation, there is very little written about the composition of these songs, and this deficiency is made more serious because this collection dates from a very controversial period of the composer biography.

In all catalogues of Villa-Lobos' music, *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* is listed as being composed in 1919. But recent biographical studies have been challenging the composition dates of many early nationalist works, such as the ballets *Uirapuru* and *Amazonas*. There is a growing understanding that Villa-Lobos' nationalist style developed after his first trip to Paris in 1923, and if this is indeed true, the composition dates for *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* need to be revisited.

¹ Vasco Mariz, *A Canção Brasileira de Câmara* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Francisco Alves Editora S. A., 2002), 177-181.

Even though there was nationalist music being composed in Brazil before Villa-Lobos, he was the first to develop a fully consolidated nationalist style, and did so with such success that his personal style defined what would be considered Brazilian musical nationalism for decades after his death.²

As the first chapter will explain, for the first four hundred years of history after the discovery of Brazil, upper class musical culture was essentially transplanted from Europe, and the size of the country and separation between the many different ethnic groups did not allow for the formation of a musical national identity. In the end of the nineteenth-century, around the time of the proclamation of Brazil as a republic, things began to change, and the first examples of music that could be identified as Brazilian, first in the realm of popular music and then in the art song genre, started to appear. The second chapter will examine these first experiences in Brazilian nationalist art music, and will discuss nationalism in the formation of the Brazilian musical identity.

The third and fourth chapters are a critical analysis of Villa-Lobos' biography, focusing on the events surrounding the creation and definition of his nationalist style. To this end, the chapters will contrast the many existing biographies about the composer with the most recent scholarship, trying to identify not only the questionable facts about his biography, but the reasons behind their creation. In this way, the creation of the Villa-Lobos "myth" will be placed within the larger context of the creation of a national identity during the "Vargas years"³ (1930 – 1945).

² By works Brazilian musical nationalism, this paper is considering works of art music that use musical elements from Brazilian folklore and popular traditions, and in this way excluding those of indirect nationalist character.

³ Period in which Brazil was governed by Getúlio Vargas.

The two final chapters will use *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* as a case study for supporting the chronology defended in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 5 will discuss the source material used for these songs, and will investigate the evidence surrounding the composition and the dating of these songs. The final chapter will analyze the textual and musical elements of these songs, identifying techniques present in this music that are characteristic of the style developed in the “Paris years.” Both of these final chapters will challenge the alleged 1919 composition date of these songs.

This document’s literary and documentary style is based on Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.⁴

⁴ Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Chapter 1: BEFORE A NATION

1.

Brazilian culture spent a long time being defined by European tastes, even after the country's independence in 1822. Since the beginning of colonization in the sixteenth-century, Brazil had what Nelson Sodr  called a "transplanted civilization," meaning that different from other colonial areas, such as the colonies of the orient and some in Africa, the elements needed for the colonization enterprise were imported, such as European settlers and African slaves.⁵ With the arrival of the *Companhia de Jesus* (Society of Jesus) in the middle of the sixteenth-century, native Brazilian Indians, the only non-transplanted element, were either enslaved or converted to Catholicism and forced to embrace the transplanted European culture, or had to flee to the country's interior, keeping their culture in isolation for centuries. African slaves also had their native religious culture repressed by force, and what survived had to be hidden and isolated in the *quilombos*, communities originally formed by slaves that had fled from the sugar cane plantations⁶; or disguised as Christianity, in a process now known as syncretism.

Until much later in the country's history, around the end of the nineteenth-century, Brazil could not be considered a nation, nor could any form of nationalist sentiment emerge. When discussing concepts of ethnicity and nation, Anthony Smith

⁵ Nelson Werneck Sodr , *S ntese de Hist ria da Cultura Brasileira*, 15th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1988), 4-9.

⁶ Mary del Priore and Renato Venancio, *Uma Breve Hist ria do Brasil* (S o Paulo: Editora Planeta do Brasil, 2012), 59.

presents two different views: through the optics of a nationalist ideology, or with definitions of nation independent from it⁷, but neither applies to Brazil during its first centuries of history. The three different ethnic groups that lived in the country did not share a common language, territory, or political system; neither did they share more subjective factors that could define a nation, such as sentiments and attitudes. The encounter and merging of these cultures would be a slow process that would accelerate in the nineteenth-century, allowing for the first time the appearance of a Brazilian national identity, and consequently, nationalist music.

In the first centuries of its existence, Brazil was only colonized to the point it would help the extraction of its natural resources, Brazilwood (which gives the country its name) initially, and precious stones and products such as sugar-cane, and coffee a couple of centuries later. The country was divided into *capitanias* and the countryside was explored with the intention of searching for precious stones and enslaving the Indigenous population.

In the middle of the sixteenth-century, the *Companhia de Jesus*, popularly known as the Jesuits, founded many schools. The main role of these schools was to pacify rebellious Indigenous people, alienating them from most of their tradition. Many conflicts between the Portuguese and the tribes followed, forcing the Indigenous communities from the coast to move to the interior of the country, causing conflicts with other tribes, and bringing new diseases in a process that exterminated a huge part of the native population of Brazil. As Enders describes, “The Indigenous villages near Salvador (a

⁷ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 10-12.

large city of the northeast) housed in 1560 forty thousand Indians. Twenty years later, only ten thousand were left.”⁸ These two factors: the accentuated diminution of the Indigenous population and the Christianization of the survivors nearly destroyed the music and culture of these communities, and Indigenous Brazilian culture would only survive intact in very remote areas, as we will see ahead.

Indigenous culture, not only in regard to language, but also in its spontaneity and variety of its forms, was slowly replaced, in the range of influence of the missionaries, by another kind of culture, according to the ideals of the Jesuits, and their conception of life and of the world, identic for all populations.⁹

With the Afro-Brazilian population, the process of alienation was different but had similar results. Slaves were not allowed to express their musical and religious culture by dictum from the Catholic Church. Especially from the beginning of the seventeenth-century, slave owners could be severely punished if they allowed their slaves to perform rites of their native religion¹⁰. This started a process of syncretism in which the African religions disguised themselves as Catholic veneration of saints. The only place where the Afro-Brazilians were somewhat free to nurture their own culture was in the communities of escaped slaves called *quilombos*. Nevertheless, the *terreiros*, places of worship for the African religions, started seeing an increase of white participants in the seventeenth and early eighteenth-century. The *batuques*, a generic term used to describe Afro-Brazilian ritual manifestations, became more and more popular with the population of European decent, a fact that increased the repression of these gatherings by the police.

⁸ Armele Enders, *A Nova História do Brasil*, trans. Marisa Motta (Rio de Janeiro: Gryphus Editora, 2012), 39.

⁹ Fernando de Azevedo, *A Cultura Brasileira: Introdução ao Estudo da Cultura no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Melhoramentos, 1943), 294.

¹⁰ José Ramos Tinhorão, *Os Sons dos Negros no Brasil*, 3rd ed. (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2012), 43-49.

Art music being played in the country during the colonial period was essentially imported from Europe, even though many times executed by orchestras of Afro-Brazilians. The dominant society believed musical training was part of a refined education, but the execution of music for social gatherings and private parties was seen as a servant's job. And because most of the Indigenous population migrated to the countryside, this role was relegated to the black slaves and servants. There is documentation of many black orchestras being created all over the country in the middle of the seventeenth-century, and the "innate" musicality of the Africans was praised.¹¹

Brazilian popular music started to develop at the beginning of the seventeenth-century. As noted by José Ramos Tinhorão, a prominent characteristic of the early culture of Brazil during the first centuries of its history is the coexistence of musical expressions in the cities: sacred and art music, following the taste of the dominant classes; and popular forms of entertainment, connected to the rural population.¹² These early forms of popular music were initially simple songs (*modinhas* and *cantigas*), adaptations of the urban songs brought by the Portuguese, and later, dances with African influences, such as the *lundú*, that moved from the *terreiros* to the houses of the lower class population in rural areas. In the next century, these rural artistic genres started to permeate city life, with their rhythmic patterns disguised as *modinhas*.

The only significant examples of art music being composed by Brazilians during the early colonial period, but still poorly documented, belong to the period known as

¹¹ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 34-35.

¹² José Ramos Tinhorão, *História Social da Música Popular Brasileira*, 2nd ed. (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2010), 36.

Barroco Mineiro (baroque from Minas Gerais, a state on the southwest of Brazil). Minas Gerais went through a fast growth period with the discovery of large deposits of precious stones, and that gave birth to the first bourgeois class of the country.

The music created during the *Barroco Mineiro*, roughly from 1710 to 1810, although interesting, cannot be considered an exercise in nationalist music. The music written by the composers from this period is essentially sacred and ceremonial, and follows the European style, going through a distinct evolution, from pieces with Renaissance influences in the beginning, going through the baroque style in the middle of the century, to the appearance of pre-classic traits in its last compositions.¹³ It is almost as if the art music composers of Minas Gerais were playing catch up with the evolution of European music. Nevertheless, the period was very important for the development of Brazilian art music because of the sheer number of classical composers appearing in the state, and because it started the tradition of art music composed by Brazilians. A recurrent anecdote was told at the time which said that there were more musicians in Minas Gerais than in Portugal during the last decades of the eighteenth-century.¹⁴

2.

¹³ Paulo Castagna, *A Música Religiosa Mineira no século XVIII e primeira metade do século XIX* (São Paulo: Handout for the course of Brazilian Music History – UNESP, 2004).

¹⁴ Paulo Castagna and João Marcos Coelho, *A Pauta Restaurada do Som das Cidades* (O Estado de São Paulo, november 12, 2011).

In the early 1800s, the Portuguese court found itself in a very delicate situation. With the escalation of the Napoleonic wars, it was caught in between England and France without the possibility of siding with one without facing destruction by the other. The situation escalated to the point when, in 1807, the court fled to Brazil in the middle of the night, arriving in Rio de Janeiro in 1808. The ports were open to friendly nations, the colony was elevated to the status of kingdom as part of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves, and the official seat of the Portuguese crown was transferred to Rio de Janeiro.

This peculiar historical incident generated a fast development in Brazil that would result in a vast acceleration of the artistic production in the country. The Portuguese court brought with them their musical predilections. This also contributed to the emergence of the first significant (and well documented) composer of Brazilian origin, José Maurício Nunes Garcia (1767 – 1830).

“One of the first measures adopted by Dom João VI (King of Portugal) was organizing the Royal Chapel following the example of Lisbon and, displeasing the wishes of the Portuguese high-clergy, nominated José Maurício as his Grand Chapel Master. Even though he suffered from a “color flaw”¹⁵ (being Afro-Brazilian), he was very supported by the monarch and was decorated in 1809.”¹⁶

Nunes Garcia is the first composer of Brazilian origin most of whose music has survived, some of it still being performed, but its style of composition has nothing that could be considered national. This is not surprising because the nation was still at the

¹⁵ By the use of the term “color flaw,” Medaglia is depicting the racist attitude of the time.

¹⁶ Julio Medaglia, *Música Maestro!* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 2008), 233.

very beginning of its formation at this point in history. His music is essentially sacred with notable influences of Bach, Haydn, and Mozart.¹⁷

Brazil acquired its independence by the end of the period of the Brazilian Empire. The official date is September 7th of 1822, but many historians place the birth of Brazil as a nation during the 1817 revolution, also known as the *Revolução Pernambucana* (Revolution of Pernambuco, a state in the Northeast). The revolution asked for independence and proclamation of a republic. Even if short-lived, it weakened Don João's confidence in creating his American empire and proved that Brazil was not isolated from the ideals that had been shaking monarchies all over Europe.¹⁸

“The shining milestone of Brazilian nationalism,” we said about the revolution of seventeen. Yes, because in vain we would search in our history reason of greater glory. Even losing, the men that rose in Pernambuco defined themselves as apostles and heroes.¹⁹

The process of independence that followed was unique. Don João VI, responding to the political climate in Portugal, decided to return the court to his homeland. But his son, Don Pedro I, stayed behind and proclaimed himself emperor, creating the Empire of Brazil (1822 – 1889). This generated a period of great division in the Brazilian elite. There was not a real option of independence, but only a choice between supporting the

¹⁷ Mário de Andrade, *Pequena História da Música*, 9th ed. (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1987), 155-156.

¹⁸ Laurentino Gomes, *1808 – Como uma rainha louca, um príncipe medroso e uma corte corrupta enganaram Napoleão e mudaram a história de Portugal e do Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Planeta do Brasil, 2007), 265-273.

¹⁹ Marcelo Bonfim, *O Brasil na História: Deturpação das Tradições – Degradação Política* (Belo Horizonte: Editora PUC Minas, 2013), 363.

Portuguese crown, a fairly liberal government, or siding with the new Brazilian emperor and risking falling back to an absolutist regime.²⁰

Nevertheless, Don Pedro I was a great enthusiast of the arts, being himself a trained musician. This fact did not prevent the decline of the musical production with the dissolution of the Royal Chapel, and the feeble attempt to recreate it as the Imperial Chapel. With independence, the country fell into a deep financial crisis and everything considered non-essential suffered a great deal. The enthusiasm for art music during the first Empire was maintained by a sudden interest of the dominant class in Italian opera. Rossini was a great favorite and Rio de Janeiro became an important center of operatic activity.²¹ This trend would much later culminate with the appearance of the first Brazilian musician to achieve international acclamation, the opera composer Antonio Carlos Gomes (1836-1896).

A noteworthy composer of this complicated period is Francisco Manuel da Silva (1795-1865). He was a student of Nunes Garcia and Sigismund von Neukomm, and his works fall under their influence and are still entirely in a European style. He was an accomplished conductor and instrumentalist, and had great importance in maintaining the teaching of music and development of the musical life of Rio de Janeiro during the turbulent period of the first empire.²² This period of modest musical achievement, also marked by an economic depression, would only end after the second emperor, Dom Pedro II, ascended to the throne when he came to age.

²⁰ Mary del Priore and Renato Venancio, *Uma Breve História do Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Planeta do Brasil, 2012), 164.

²¹ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 60-66.

²² Julio Medaglia, *Música Maestro!* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 2008), 237.

3.

During the second empire, Brazil enjoyed a period of musical excellence. Italian companies brought famous voices to perform in national theaters, and there were many concerts being performed, both by international and national virtuosi. The first instrumental societies and popular concert series appeared.²³ It was during this period that the first composer that can be associated with nationalist aspirations appears, Antonio Carlos Gomes.

Carlos Gomes was arguably the most important musician of the Americas in the nineteenth-century, and his music was extremely successful in Italy.²⁴ He provided an important step for the appearance of nationalist Brazilian music, using Brazilian texts and themes as sources for his librettos, such as *Lo Schiavo* from 1889, based on the romance by Alfredo d'Escagnolle Taunay; and his most famous work, *Il Guarany* from 1870, based on the famous novel by José de Alencar. In this latter opera, Carlos Gomes tells a story of two lovers, an Indigenous Brazilian from the *Guarany* tribe, Peri; and a woman of Luso-Brazilian (Portuguese) descendent, Cecília (Ceci). The story is set in the southeast of the country, somewhere in the now mostly destroyed Atlantic Forest. Conceptually, the work is very important in the advancement of the development of Brazilian nationalism in the arts, but musically speaking; the opera follows a late-

²³ Mário de Andrade, *Pequena História da Música*, 9th ed. (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1987), 160.

²⁴ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 75.

romantic Italian style and cannot be considered a work of distinctively Brazilian musical character.²⁵

The novel *O Guarani* (1857) is a good example of how Brazilian artists were depicting the country at midcentury. It follows a style of representation then known as *indianismo* which portrayed Indigenous Brazilians in a romanticized, heroic fashion that was characteristic of early Brazilian nationalism. The novel is an adaptation of the figure of the medieval knight, with a hint of pastoral purity. Brazil was depicted as exotic, both to the population of the country as to Europeans. Indigenous culture was still very isolated from the urban populations at the middle of the nineteenth-century and this remoteness would only diminish with exploratory expeditions during the beginning of the twentieth-century, such as the one led by the anthropologist Edgar Roquette-Pinto, one of Villa-Lobos main sources of information regarding native culture of the Amazonian Indians.²⁶

Indianismo contrasts greatly with the urban literature that would appear in the beginning of the twentieth-century, particularly works such as *Macunaíma* (1928) by Mário de Andrade, where the protagonist is a far from virtuous character of mixed ethnic heritage. This new style of literature resonated with a much larger number of Brazilians as an expression of their culture and daily life, and the amoral character of *Macunaíma* was in tune with the emergence of the figure of the *malandro*, the Brazilian “bad-boy”

²⁵ Donald J. Grout and Hermine Weigel Williams, *A Short History of Opera*, 4th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 560.

²⁶ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia Limitada, 1989), 40.

that would lead a life of petty crime and little effort, and that would be featured in much Brazilian literature, music, and cinema for the majority of the twentieth-century.

There are many works that compare these two characters, the Indigenous Brazilian Peri and the multi-cultural Macunaíma, such as “Exotic Nations” by Renata Wasserman.²⁷ Peri is a typical noble-savage, with great virtues still not corrupted by civilization, while the multicultural Macunaíma represents and embraces all the flaws of civilization with great pride. This shift of identity towards a more inclusive form of nationalism can be seen in the music of the first composers who wrote Brazilian nationalist art music, and remains important in the selection of themes for *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*.

4.

In 1889, Brazil becomes a republic and a decline of music in the European style composed in Brazilian soil begins. This was motivated by a growing amount of research and interest in folk music, which over the next thirty years increasingly found its way into the larger urban areas.²⁸ It was also reinforced by the connection that some Brazilian composers had with European counterparts that championed national styles, such as Alberto Nepomuceno’s friendship with Edward Grieg. This was fundamental in fostering the desire for the creation of a Brazilian nationalist repertoire.

²⁷ Renata R. Mautner Wasserman, *Exotic Nations: literature and cultural identity in the United States and Brazil* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1994).

²⁸ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 9.

There was also a rise in the presence of popular music in the life of the great cities, especially with the growth of the *maxixe* (also called the Brazilian tango) that would be one of the main formative influences in the development of the samba, and the beginning of the *choro*, an urban style of extreme popularity in Rio de Janeiro.²⁹ The origin of these popular styles, especially in relation to Villa-Lobos' formative years and *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, will be studied in the next chapters.

As stated before, nationalism had already appeared in other arts such as in the *indianismo* literature, and as it is common in the history of the arts, music was one of the last art forms to embrace the new styles. For the first time in the history of the country, the two main ingredients for the appearance of nationalist art music in Brazil are present: the desire on the part of a group of composers to create such a body of work; and more accessible musical elements the larger population of the country would recognize as having a distinct national character.

²⁹ Jairo Severiano, *Uma História da Música Popular Brasileira: Das Origens a Modernidade* (São Paulo: Editora 34), 28-37.

Chapter 2: THE FIRST NATIONALIST EXPERIENCES

1.

Villa-Lobos's creation of a Brazilian national style of art music was only possible because of the alignment of many different factors. Besides the changes in the political scenery discussed in the last chapter, Brazil began a fairly intentional process of creation of a national identity. There was an effort to distance the new republic from its origin which was marked by slavery. Although there was an initial inclination toward ignoring this past, a social doctrine of embracing all ethnic heritages that helped to make the Brazilian nation prevailed. This theory was championed by many prominent figures, but especially for the study of Villa-Lobos, by Edgar Roquette-Pinto who was instrumental in the development of the "three people nation"³⁰ theory of Brazil, a part of the Brazilian identity today.

In the realm of music, several factors combined to provide the population with a much broader awareness of their vast country: the attention given to Afro-Brazilian music coming out of the rural areas and invading the cities in an accelerated pace; the growing interest in music of Brazil prompted by new research expeditions and documentation, and the consolidation of urban popular music genres that could be considered Brazilian, not transplanted. These were fundamental in developing a sense of Brazilian unity that would

³⁰ Indigenous, African, and European.

lay the foundation for the type of nationalist style pursued by Villa-Lobos, which can be viewed as an adaptation in the musical real of the “three people nation” theory. There were, of course, earlier examples of popular music that mixed multiple influences in the process of creating new music that could be considered uniquely Brazilian. What is being brought into attention in the Villa-Lobos case is the development of a style that could be identified as Brazilian by a large portion of the population.

In the process of consolidation of these national styles of popular music, and especially in the influence they had on art music composers, the most important name is Ernesto Nazareth (1863-1934), mostly associated with the genre of *chorinho*. Because of his instrument of choice, the piano, his music was and still is appropriated and performed by classical pianists in concert, who find his pianistic writing style as clearly influenced by Chopin.³¹ As a *chorinho* musician and aficionado, Villa-Lobos was very fond of Nazareth’s music and affirmed on more than one occasion that his music was the true incarnation of the Brazilian soul. Brasília Itiberê, one of the first composers to experiment with adding Brazilian musical elements to art music, also pointed out that Nazareth outlined the rhythm of the Brazilian polka and the *lundús* with extreme precision.³² Nazareth composed over 90 Brazilian tangos or *maxixes*, as well as 43 waltzes.

The *maxixe* syncopation permeates most of these early styles of popular music, and was already consolidated as the fundamental rhythmic element of Brazilian music.

³¹ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 121-123.

³² Brasília Itiberê, “Ernesto Nazareth na Música Brasileira,” *Boletim Latino Americano de Música*, tome IV, apr 1946.

The most popular of these styles, the *chorinho* and the *modinha*, share a serenading character and were central to the early attempts toward a nationalist style of art music. The *chorinho* contributed a fluid and improvisatory style particularly in the realm of instrumental music, while the *modinha* influenced the style of vocal melodies, as it will be discussed in chapter 5.

Even though Villa-Lobos was the first composer to shun convention and introduce novel sounds with enough consistency to create a Brazilian nationalist style of art music, there were a few previous compositions that can be classified as works of Brazilian musical nationalism. These, however, were sporadic attempts within the body of work of earlier composers and were too different in character to constitute a clearly defined style. These first experiences paved the road and in certain ways gave “permission” to the young Villa-Lobos to immerse himself in Brazilian music, something that was not always viewed with approval by older composers and critics who were still grounded in the Italian *belcanto* tastes of the imperial years. The resistance against this new music was not only fueled by diverging views and ideas about what course Brazilian art music should follow, but as pointed by Vasco Mariz, considering that the richest and most picturesque part of Brazilian popular music came from the African tradition, racism played an important role in this debate.³³

These first examples of Brazilian musical nationalism were guided by European and Brazilian nineteenth-century art music practices and, even though nationalism was already a trait of nineteenth-century music, the increased flexibility of twentieth-century

³³ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 113.

music - not relying so much on pre-established formal and harmonic structures, encouraging experimentation - gave many composers license to incorporate exotic elements to guide the entire construction of their music. In fact, the twentieth-century saw an explosion of many distinct nationalist styles, for example those pioneered by composers like De Falla or Janacek. This freedom was also vital for Villa-Lobos to move toward the creation of a true nationalist style.

2.

Brazilian musical sources used by these first composers experimenting with Brazilian art music were limited to urban popular music and dance styles.³⁴ The work for piano *A Sertaneja*, by Brasília Itiberê da Cunha (1846-1913), can be considered the first work of art music to use musical elements that would be identified as unequivocally Brazilian. It is politically relevant that this composition was written by a composer deeply involved with the abolitionist campaign, which ended slavery in Brazil in 1888.

The aptly named “Brasília” was born into a family of musicians. Itiberê became a diplomat after being appointed by the Brazilian Emperor Don Pedro II himself, and was sent to Prussia for two years in 1871. His last diplomatic assignment is of particular relevance to this discussion, for it was during his years in Italy that he served as an assistant to Carlos Gomes and this afforded him direct contact with a master composer known for including Brazilian elements in his operas, even if limited to the choice of

³⁴ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 10.

subject matter for his librettos. It was during this period in Italy, while based in Rome, that he also had contact with the Hungarian pianist Franz Liszt.

Liszt was part of the very impressive list of celebrities that visited Itiberê's apartment in Rome, and it was in one of these reunions, with the presence of Anton Rubinstein and Sgambatti amongst others, that Liszt played Itiberê's composition *A Sertaneja*. The piece was well-received at the time, some suggesting that Liszt may have recorded it, but if that ever happened, the recording has been long lost.³⁵

If not for *A Sertaneja*, Brasília Itiberê would be a forgotten name by now and would not be found in most books about the history of Brazilian music. But *A Sertaneja* is indeed a remarkable composition and has many characteristics that point toward a new style. This work for solo piano contains a melody extracted from the popular repertory: “Balaio, meu bem, balaio.”

This tune was very popular and displayed the rhythm of *maxixe*, a local variant of the *habanera* rhythm. As explained above, the *maxixe* provided the foundational rhythmic element for many popular Brazilian popular music genres. Different from the early *modinha* or *lundú*, that were sometimes still considered “foreign” by some Brazilian audiences³⁶, this song was the first example of Brazilian popular music used in an art music setting that would be accepted by a large part of the population.

³⁵ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 115.

³⁶ As the next chapter will show, the *modinha* was indeed transplanted from Portugal and would go through a transformation process before its Brazilian version. On the other hand, the *lundú*, of Afro-Brazilian origin, even if created in Brazil, was rejected by many as “slave music” and its musical characteristics ended up being assimilated by the later style of *modinha*.

The merit of *A Sertaneja* in introducing Brazilian elements into art music goes beyond simple quotation of the original melody. Most of the themes and rhythms in the composition follow the style of the urban popular music of the southeast of Brazil, and the harmonic structures come from the *modinha*, also already in its developed Brazilian version. The similarities in terms of tonal harmony and time signatures of these early urban popular styles to European art music facilitated the first musical nationalist experiences, and did not require a larger departure from the nineteenth-century style.

Following the opening scherzo-like virtuosic opening, there is a theme composed by Itiberê that is in clear imitation of the style and atmosphere of the *modinha*, with its characteristic ornaments in the higher part and modulation to the subdominant (Example 3-1). After a recapitulation of the first theme, we come to the *balaio* melody, which appears in a rhythm that can be clearly associated with the *maxixe*, also known as the Brazilian Tango (Example 3-2).

Moderato $MM \text{ } \text{♩} = 56$

First system: piano accompaniment with many beamed sixteenth notes, vocal line with a trill. Markings: *roll.*, *a tempo*, *p*, *con tenerezza*.

Second system: piano accompaniment with a *dolce* marking, vocal part with a trill.

Third system: piano accompaniment with a *f* marking, vocal part with a trill. Markings: *rit.*, *raddolcendo*, *dolce*.

Example 2-1 *A Sertaneja*, mm. 63-77.³⁷

³⁷ Brazílio Itiberê da Cunha, *A Sertaneja*, op. 15, piano score (Rio de Janeiro: Arthur Napoleão Ltda., 1869), 3.



Example 2-2 *A Sertaneja*, mm. 112-121.³⁸

The harmony from Itiberê's *A Sertaneja* follows the common harmonic progressions associated with the *modinha*, which alternates between a major key and its minor homonym, in this case A \flat Major and Minor.

Another composer prior to Villa-Lobos to experiment with nationalist music was Alexandre Levy (1864-1892), a professional musician, born into a family of musicians that also had a close connection with Carlos Gomes. His influence on Levy was clear for he wrote fantasies on themes from Gomes' operas *Il Guarany* and *Fosca*. It is possible that Carlos Gomes choice of nationalist themes played an important role in the young Levy's inclination to write nationalist music, which he approached in a couple of different ways.

³⁸ Brazílio Itiberê da Cunha, *A Sertaneja*, op. 15, piano score (Rio de Janeiro: Arthur Napoleão Ltda., 1869), 5.

Like most composers from the period, Levy studied in Europe. It was during these years that he came in contact with and was influenced by nationalist composers from the French music revival that was happening at the time, under the command of the National Society for French Music. He was also exposed to works by composers from the Russian, Czech, and Norwegian nationalist movements. It is during this time, around 1887, that he wrote his most popular nationalist compositions.³⁹

Levy was outspoken about his intentions to contribute to this emerging style of music and he believed it was only a matter of time before such a national repertory would emerge in Brazil. He also defended the opinion that a composer needed to research folk and popular music from the entire country in order to write Brazilian music that was truly inclusive, and not just associated with the southeastern urban popular songs of the period.⁴⁰

His first work in this new genre is the *Variations sur un thème Brésilien*, considered the first art music work based on Brazilian folk music. Most likely composed immediately before his departure or during the first months of his stay in Europe in 1887, this is a set of 13 variations over the folk melody “Vem cá, bitú.” The melody consists of descending phrases, a common trait in many Brazilian folk songs.⁴¹

The merit of this composition as a nationalist work lies solely in the choice of source material. Other than that, it is a traditional set of variations in the European style

³⁹ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 18-19.

⁴⁰ Carlos Penteado de Rezende, “Alexandre Levy na Europa em 1887,” *O Estado de São Paulo*, January 19 1946.

⁴¹ João Ribeiro, *O Folklore* (Rio de Janeiro: Jacintho Ribeiros dos Santos, 1919) pp 227-9.

with no intent to recreate a Brazilian musical atmosphere. The result is a musical setting that resembles that of Germanic composers from the middle of the nineteenth-century. It is nevertheless an important early composition that demonstrates the composer's interest in writing Brazilian music from the beginning of his short career.

The next nationalist work by Levy, also a composition for piano, is called *Tango Brasileiro*, and it was published in the *Diário Popular* newspaper in 1890. This work features the *maxixe* rhythm, also known at the time as the Brazilian tango. There is no evidence that any specific folk or popular source was collected. Instead, it seems that the piece is a newly created composition that seeks to capture the atmosphere of Brazilian urban popular music and translate it to the language of art music. This is a very different approach to nationalist music when compared to *Variations sur un thème Brésilien*, because it moves away from the simple quotation of melodies or rhythms. This change in approach constituted a stronger step toward the creation of a national style, which Levy might have realized himself if he had not died at the young age of twenty-seven.

The last work Levy composed of nationalist inspiration reflects his desire for composers to embrace the music of the entire country. It included the first reference to rural popular music in the concert hall. Written for his favorite medium, the orchestra, the *Suíte Brasileira* is also from the year of 1890 and features in the prelude the same folk melody used in his *Variations sur un thème Brésilien*. In this prelude, the theme is treated in a European style, almost Wagnerian, and the resulting atmosphere is not as effective in reflecting the Brazilian music as in the case of *Tango Brasileiro*. The two middle movements are also of Germanic influence and have no clearly identifiable elements of

Brazilian music. The last movement though, *Samba*, is the one of particular interest to this discussion, and another step forward toward the creation of a Brazilian national style.

Levy's "Samba" is one of the most widely performed works in the Brazilian symphonic repertory and it is certainly different from anything else written before. There is a discussion about where Levy got the inspiration for this movement and authors, such as Porto Alegre and Béhague, believe that there is enough evidence to conclude that it is programmatic music depicting an Afro-Brazilian dance and trance scene from a very famous Brazilian naturalist novel, *A Carne* by Julio Ribeiro.^{42 43} Levy was a literature enthusiast and affirmed that a good musician should always read the best literary works. As such, a scene from Ribeiro's novel is quoted in the introduction to the first edition of the piano reduction of the variations, even though Levy does not clearly state that this was the original inspiration for the piece.

Nevertheless, this music has always been associated with this excerpt of text, and there is no doubt that Levy was familiar with the novel. There is also no doubt left from his biographies that he could not have come in direct contact with the cultural manifestation in discussion here. *A Carne* was a huge scandal when it was released in 1888 and it is full of detailed descriptions of sensual scenes and romantic depictions of overt sexuality. This passage, also quoted by Gelásio Pimenta in his biography of Levy⁴⁴, describes what many scholars identify as a representation of the rural *samba*. The author

⁴²Ignácio Porto-Alegre, "Alexandre Levy: Compositor e Pianista Brasileiro," *Polyanthéa*. Rio de Janeiro: Gazeta Musical, [February 1892].

⁴³ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 23-24.

⁴⁴ Gelásio Pimenta, *Alexandre Levy: trabalho apresentado ao Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de São Paulo*, em sessão de 20 de Setembro de 1910 (São Paulo: Rosenhain, 1911).

describes a celebration, with many African descendants playing percussion instruments and dancing in a circle in a state of frenzy, and singing in a responsorial fashion. There is a passage later that describes the whole event as a *samba*, but it is important to understand that the word at this time was used in reference to many different dances and musical styles.

As described by Tinhorão, generic terms such as *samba* and *batuque* were used to describe many different dances that shared the choreographic movement known as *umbigada*, which included the *lundú*, *coco*, *samba de roda* from Bahia, and the *samba carioca* from Rio de Janeiro. The step consisted of a couple bumping navels and it was considered scandalous by the white society. It comes as no surprise then that Ribeiro chose this form of expression to create a scene in his scandalous book. Tinhorão also affirms that the urban song genre that would be later associated with the word *samba* would not develop for some time.⁴⁵

Levy appealed to the general Brazilian population by choosing two melodies that were well-known in urban areas. Both of these songs have very regular rhythms, a characteristic of *samba rural*, as described by Mário de Andrade⁴⁶, which makes it easy to use these melodies without having to change the overall character of the movement.

The first melody was already mentioned in connection to da Cunha's *A Sertaneja*, the melody "Balaio, meu bem, balaio." The second melody was from "Se eu te ameí,"

⁴⁵ José Ramos Tinhorão, *Os Sons dos Negros no Brasil*. 3rd ed.. (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2012), 85.

⁴⁶ Mário de Andrade, "O Samba Rural Paulista," *Revista do Arquivo Municipal de São Paulo*, XLI (1937), 113.

famous in the São Paulo region thanks to the well-known setting by the composer José de Almeida Cabral, chapel master for the *Capela da Sé*.

Levy manages to keep the composition's structure very close to that of the literary scene. However, the musical source material is written in the style of urban songs and dances from the southeast, not in the early rural *samba* style, which he probably never had the opportunity to experience except through Julio Ribeiro's description. This does not diminish in any way the importance of Levy's work, but it shows how knowledge of local forms of music was regionally contained and both the majority of composers and the urban population in general still had very limited knowledge of the music from other parts of the country.

Besides urban popular music source materials, Levy uses a characteristic repetition of notes in the accompaniment, evocative of *maxixe*, which would be later associated with the *chorinho*.⁴⁷ The result is the first attempt to merge the rural folk music with urban song and dance genres from the southeast region in a same musical composition. Although perhaps poorly executed from a musicological standpoint, this piece is a tribute to Levy's ideal to unite the entire country under a single national style of music.

3.

⁴⁷ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 26.

As explained in the beginning of the chapter, the motivation to explore the Brazilian musical landscape came mostly from an intellectual and literary movement that proposed to investigate which elements defined Brazil as a nation. The movement arose in opposition to the previously romanticized view of African slaves and, most strongly, the Indigenous population. This new view was self-critical, harboring perhaps a sense of inferiority vis-à-vis Europe, but also with the conviction that this narrative could be changed.⁴⁸ So, for composers such as Levy and Itiberê, trying to understand what it means to be Brazilian would be the attitude associated with the idea of being “modern.” Even though these two composers aided the movement towards a Brazilian nationalist style, their efforts are still modest in comparison to the impressive work of the main composer of the generation, Alberto Nepomuceno (1864 – 1920). Nepomuceno had success in many different genres of music, including Portuguese-language art songs which proved to be a major influence in the later consolidation of a Brazilian nationalist style by Villa-Lobos.

Nepomuceno’s biography offer hints of why he was better able to understand the music of an emerging nation than the two previous composers discussed in this chapter. Unlike the last two examples, Nepomuceno was born and raised outside the Rio-São Paulo region and was exposed from an early age to different folk and popular forms of expression that were still unknown to most urban residents of the southeastern part of the country. Vasco Mariz described his fondness for popular culture, commenting that he

⁴⁸ Mônica Pimenta Velloso, “O Modernismo e a questão nacional,” in *O Tempo do Liberalismo Excludente: da Proclamação da República à Revolução de 1930*, ed. Lucilia de Almeida Neves and Jorge Ferreira (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2003), 355-357.

routinely hummed popular songs from the northeast region of Brazil and was an avid collector of popular poetry.⁴⁹

Nepomuceno was born in Fortaleza, in the northeastern state of Ceará and began his studies in the city of Recife in the state of Pernambuco, also in the northeast of Brazil. At the young age of 18, he was already directing concerts with the *Clube Carlos Gomes*, a very important musical institution that provided musical instruction and access to art music. Founded in 1879, this institution offers one more connection to the figure of the maestro Carlos Gomes and his legacy of interest in the development of a Brazilian nationalist style. During this period, the composer studied with his father and with the maestro Euclides Fonseca.⁵⁰ Also in Recife, Nepomuceno got involved in the abolitionist and republican causes which influenced his views of a unified nation encompassing many different ethnic heritages.

After returning to Ceará and failing to receive financial assistance to study abroad, Nepomuceno moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1884, where four years later he would receive the sponsorship from the sculptor Rodolfo Bernadelli to move to Europe to study. His first important attempt in the direction of a nationalist style is from this period. *Dança de Negros*, composed in 1887, is the first example of an Afro-Brazilian dance featured within a Brazilian art music setting.⁵¹ This work is also of special importance when one considers that it was composed two years before the abolition of slavery in Brazil, a cause that was dear to Nepomuceno.

⁴⁹ Vasco Mariz, *A Canção Brasileira de Câmara* (Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves, 2002), 58.

⁵⁰ José Amaro Santos da Silva, *Música e Ópera no Santa Isabel: Subsídio para a História e o Ensino de Música no Recife* (Recife: Editora Universitária UFPE, 2006), 179.

⁵¹ Levy's "Samba" is from 1890.

He spent seven years studying in Europe, where he was exposed to the most current trends in art music and to the best formal music education available at the time. He studied initially in Rome at the *Liceo Musicale Santa Cecilia*. In 1890, he moved to Berlin to study at the *Akademische Hochschule Stern'sches Konservatorium*. It was during this stay in Germany that he developed a close friendship with Edward Grieg, a major influence in Nepomuceno's later advocacy for Brazilian nationalist music. After marrying one of Grieg's students, the pianist Walborg Bang, Nepomuceno moved with his new wife to Grieg's residence in Bergen.⁵² In 1894, he moved to Paris to study at the *Schola Cantorum*, before returning to Rio de Janeiro around the end of 1894.

During his stay in Europe, he produced some more nationalist compositions. The String Quartet No. 3 is of particular importance, the first movement rhythmically influenced by urban popular genres, a third movement based on the *chorinho* reinterpretation of the polka, and a second and fourth movements based on lullabies from the northeast of Brazil. There is also "Galhofeira" for solo piano, the last of the *Quatro Peças Lyricas*, op. 13, that uses the *maxixe* rhythmic accompaniment extensively, as well as an improvisatory and rhapsodic melody associated with the *chorinho*, a soloistic fluidity also associated with the *maxixe*, and harmonic progressions based on other urban popular song genres.⁵³ Even in these earlier compositions, Nepomuceno incorporated musical features from different regions of Brazil, demonstrating a wider knowledge of Brazilian music than his predecessors.

⁵² Julio Medaglia, *Música Maestro!* (São Paulo: Editora Globo, 2008), 242-243.

⁵³ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 31-33.

Back in Brazil, Nepomuceno started working at the *Instituto Nacional de Música* as an organ teacher, a very important school of music in Rio de Janeiro that would later become the School of Music of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. In 1902, after the death of Leopoldo Miguez, he was nominated to the position of director of the institute. This change in direction marked a definitive shift on the focus of the institute from European music, championed by Miguez, towards a more Brazilian orientation favored by Nepomuceno.

Early in his relationship with the institute, in 1895, Nepomuceno made clear his intentions to popularize nationalist music with a concert featuring some of his Portuguese-language songs. This concert marked the start of his campaign against some journalists and music critics who defended German and Italian styles and viewed Brazilian music as inferior and improper for use in art music settings. This group was led by the critics Borgongino and Guanabara. Aided by the journalist João Itiberê da Cunha, Brasília's uncle, Nepomuceno's campaign picked up strength under the motto: "The people that do not sing in their own language have no nation."⁵⁴ Another concert was organized in 1897 in which he presented some of his symphonic works, including the premiere of his *Série Brasileira* which he started composing in 1891, while still in Berlin.

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The *Série Brasileira* is widely considered his best and most effective nationalist composition, and together with Levy's *Suíte Brasileira* (although, beyond the last movement, this latter one is not as well-known to Brazilian audiences) marks the start of

⁵⁴ "Não tem pátria um povo que não canta em sua língua"

⁵⁵ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 118.

a new tradition of composing suites on Brazilian themes. According to Béhague, this work “revealed a promising new current, and brought him more national recognition than any of his previous compositions.”⁵⁶ The emerging fame of Nepomuceno, coupled with a growing acceptance of the nationalist-themed compositions, signaled a change in attitude in Brazil, prompting an even stronger reaction from the traditionalist opposition. This suite, particularly the last movement, was received with fury by the traditionalist critics who described it as “a true insult to the divine art...”⁵⁷

The *Série Brasileira* goes beyond earlier attempts at using popular and folk sources by trying to depict in an abstract fashion many characteristics of the Brazilian musical scene. In four movements, it starts with “Alvorada na serra” (Dawn in the Mountain), based on the famous lullaby “Sapo cururu,” and also featuring imitations of the *sabiá* (true thrush) song, a bird that has been associated with the Brazilian national sentiment since 1843, when the popular poem “Canção do exílio” (Song of the Exile) by Gonçalves Dias used the *sabiá* as a symbol of the natural beauty of Brazil.

The second part is titled “Intermezzo” and makes reference again to the *maxixe*, using a tune that was most likely pre-existent and collected, as hinted by Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo.⁵⁸ It also borrows a feature from early samba by tying notes of the

⁵⁶ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 33.

⁵⁷ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 119.

⁵⁸ Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, *150 Anos de Música no Brasil (1800 – 1950)* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio, 1956), 166.

melody across bar lines creating many syncopations. Béhague further states that this intermezzo develops themes used previously in his third string quartet.⁵⁹

The following movement, “Andante,” makes no direct reference to specific Brazilian music traits, but draws its inspiration from the musical imitation of the swinging motion of a hammock as somebody takes a siesta. The local flavor is extra-musical and probably evoked nostalgically by the composer. The idea of lazy afternoons on a hammock is deeply associated with life in the coastal region of the Brazilian northeast, where Nepomuceno was born.

The final and most written-about movement, “Batuque,” is an imitation of an African dance, exploring its rhythmic elements, and as indicated on the score, it builds up toward a great frenzy. This movement was, again, intensively attacked by part of the press. Nepomuceno was criticized not only by the traditionalist critic for adding African music to his *Série Brasileira*, which they considered not worthy of being used in art music, but was also criticized by others for using an African dance from Cape Verde, instead one of the many Afro-Brazilian dances. Mariz, for example, still considers this to have been a flaw in the conception of the work by the composer.⁶⁰

The success of the 1897 concert was crucial in Nepomuceno taking over the direction of the *Instituto Nacional de Música* in 1902. From this point on, Nepomuceno would start a strong campaign in favor of nationalist music. His songs were almost exclusively composed in Portuguese. He promoted a revival of the music of Nunez

⁵⁹ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 35.

⁶⁰ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 118.

Garcia, mostly forgotten at this point, through research and the publishing of new editions of his scores. He also supported popular music composers such as Catulo da Paixão Cearense by promoting their music, giving them legitimacy as “true” artists. Finally, he began to include works of other notable Brazilian composers in the concerts promoted by the institute, including the first cello concerto by a young Heitor Villa-Lobos, who Nepomuceno also recommended to a good and trusted publisher.

In 1904, Nepomuceno composed the opening to *Garatuja*, a comic opera that unfortunately was never finished beyond the prelude. Based on the *lundú*, an important early Afro-Brazilian dance, it is considered by Vasco Mariz to be his best structured work of national character.⁶¹

In 1908, Nepomuceno promoted a series of concerts of music by the composers known as The Five (Mily Balakirev, César Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Borodin). These Russian nationalist composers were virtually unknown in Brazil, just as was the work of Claude Debussy that Nepomuceno would feature in later concerts. This marks a great shift in the institute’s focus from what it has been years earlier, in 1896, when the institute’s concerts were dedicated to the music of Richard Wagner. These activities remain largely ignored by Brazilian musicologists, some of whom insist that the visits by the Russian Ballet in 1913 and 1917 constitute the decisive moment when Brazilian audiences were introduced to the “modern” repertory.⁶²

⁶¹ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 119.

⁶² Manoel Aranha Corrêa do Lago, *O Círculo Veloso-Guerra e Darius Milhaud no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Reller, 2010), 43.

Nepomuceno was also known for criticizing folklorists for not having good musical training, as well as professional musicians for not knowing enough about the folklore and music of their own country. He rooted Brazilian music in the contribution of the three major ethnic heritages that shaped the country (European, Amerindian and African), advancing the “three people nation” theory that was so crucial for a growing sense of national identity. This position is made very clear in an interview from 1917 by the *Revista Teatral*, in which Nepomuceno eerily predicts the emergence of a figure like Villa-Lobos:

The characteristic melodies of Brazilian popular music are evidence of its Indigenous, African and Iberian ethnic origins; Moorish and the gypsy influences are also important. Unfortunately, the musical aspects of the Brazilian folklore have not been studied. These elements are still not integrated into the artistic heritage of our composers. Is our refined European education to blame? Is it what impedes the artist in the heart of civilization to get close to the simple soul of the countryside folk? [...] or is it that we have not yet had a musical genius infused with regionalist sentiment who can separate himself from all foreign influences, creating a [truly] Brazilian music?...⁶³

Towards the end of his life, he started a series of investigations on Brazilian folklore and produced the first precise observations about popular and folkloric Brazilian music, with instructions for its harmonization. But for this paper, the most important part of Nepomuceno’s works is, of course, his songs.

Although heavily criticized by Mário de Andrade and many others for his prosody, Nepomuceno is the de facto creator of Brazilian art song. He combined his belief that people should sing in their own language with his nationalist ideals, which were heavily influenced by the Russian and French modernist composers as well as by

⁶³ Sérgio Alvim Corrêa, *Alberto Nepomuceno – Catálogo Geral* (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 1985).

his friendship with Edward Grieg, creating a respectable body of Portuguese-language art songs that exhibited those musical nationalist traits.

Taking as reference the most recent critical edition of his complete surviving songs⁶⁴, Nepomuceno left us with 68 songs: 3 in Italian, 1 in Latin, 12 in French, 9 in German (with two translated to Portuguese), and 43 songs in Portuguese. The number of these songs that can be considered of nationalist inspiration is, as discussed below, the subject of much debate.

Vasco Mariz affirms that 30 percent of these songs can be called nationalist in character, which he acknowledges to be a limited number but does very little to support his claim.⁶⁵ In his book about Brazilian art song, he only identifies 4 of these songs as having nationalist inclinations⁶⁶. Two of those also appear in Béhague's book⁶⁷ and their Brazilian musical features are indeed very prominent and easy to identify. The first is the song "Xácara" which features a melody influenced by the *modinha*, with its characteristic repeated notes, short intervals, and an accompaniment that imitates a guitar, the instrument of choice for accompanying early urban Brazilian popular songs. This way of evoking a guitar also appears in the song *Trovas 2*, and would be frequently used by Villa-Lobos in many of his compositions. This is hardly an invention by these two composers. The practice is centuries old and appears in music by composers of many

⁶⁴ Alberto Nepomuceno, "Canções para Voz e Piano," ed. Dante Pignatari, voice and piano score (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2004).

⁶⁵ Vasco Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 6th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2005), 118-119.

⁶⁶ Vasco Mariz, *A Canção Brasileira de Câmara* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Francisco Alves, 2002), 60-64.

⁶⁷ Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971), 39-41.

countries, but its use here, especially in accompanying the *modinha*-style melody of “Xácará” is of nationalist intent.

Brazilian musical characteristics are not always as easy to identify in other examples, and the reason might be that Nepomuceno many times made a point of avoiding too overt or facile references in his work.⁶⁸ One will not frequently find direct quotations of popular or folk sources with frequency or a clear imitation of rhythmic patterns, so that the examples discussed above can be considered exceptions to a point. Nepomuceno sought to incorporate into his musical evocations of Brazil the new languages of the musical vanguard, such as “post Wagnerian chromaticism, the French taste for exotic modalism, ultra-romantic suspended tonality, and whole-tone and pentatonic scales.”⁶⁹

One song that can exemplify this approach is “Numa concha,” on text by Parnassian poet Olavo Bilac. The song features a melody that retains characteristics from the *modinha*, but in contrast to “Xácará,” the melody is transformed by many unusual modulations which are not characteristic of this popular style, making it more difficult to identify this music, after a first hearing, as associated with that popular tradition.

Nevertheless, his last written song, considered widely as his best achievement in the genre, is of undisputable and unmistakable nationalist inspiration. *A Jangada* (1920) is a point of encounter for all the ideals defended by Nepomuceno during his career. It is, of course, in Portuguese, based on a text by Juvenal Galeno, a popular poet from

⁶⁸ Andrade Muricy, “O Lied Brasileiro Nasceu com Alberto Nepomuceno,” *Jornal do Commercio*, Aug 30, 1939.

⁶⁹ Rodolfo Coelho de Souza, Preface to “Canções para Voz e Piano” by Alberto Nepomuceno, ed. Dante Pignatari (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2004).

Nepomuceno's home state of Ceará. It features a melody with small intervals and descending phrases, a characteristic of early urban popular song genres like the *modinha* or the *Seréstas*. The harmony features parallel motion inspired by the guitar accompaniment used in these genres, and the music is marked by modalisms, especially the use of the lowered second and raised fourth, the latter being very common in the folk music from the Brazilian northeast region. The accompaniment rhythm is syncopated in the style of *maxixe*, but the slow tempo of the song makes this aspect difficult to perceive.

Nepomuceno was a seminal figure in the creation of Brazilian nationalist art music. He did not only influence the next generation of composers, most notably for his use of vernacular for the text of his songs and the refinement with which he combined Brazilian music with the new ideas and techniques coming from Europe, but he was also extremely important in his work as director of the *Instituto Nacional de Música*. His relentless campaign to promote the music of other Brazilian composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos was essential in shifting the attitude of Brazilians towards a new and more consolidated style of nationalist music.

4.

The turn of the twentieth-century was the first time in Brazilian history when there was enough accessible information regarding Brazilian culture from all parts of the country. It was also a time when Brazilian folk and popular music

was better documented, consolidated and understood, paving the way for art music composers to incorporate it translated into art music settings.

In Nepomuceno's work, one can see a transition towards the creation of a new nationalist style, one that begins to use more modern techniques of composition that afford composers freedom to move away from earlier conventions. Consequently, some consistency in the treatment of Brazilian music material started to appear.

Villa-Lobos would draw his music from these newer musical styles and techniques, especially during and after his first trip to Europe in 1923. This allowed him to find new ways of expressing his individuality, which consolidated into a unique individual style during the second half of the 1920s. In the process, he created a new Brazilian nationalist style that would come to be emulated by many subsequent generations of composers. The famous anecdote, in which Villa-Lobos proclaimed that he became folklore personified, was not entirely untrue after all.

Chapter 3: HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS: EARLY YEARS

1.

To say that the official history of Brazil suffered a lack of accuracy during a large portion of the twentieth-century is a serious understatement. During that century, Brazil passed through two long periods in which the official history, the one promoted by the government and taught to school students, was entirely dominated by a political bias and a necessity to create an ethically superior national identity, in large part to mask the lack of democracy and freedom that marked these periods.

From 1930 to 1945, Brazil was governed by Getúlio Vargas, in the period known as *Era Vargas*. The elections of 1930, which had Júlio Prestes as the winner, were cancelled by a military coup that gave Vargas control of the country. The next 15 years were marked by other coups, a new constitution, and revolts, but the matter of fact is that Getúlio Vargas managed to stay in power until 1945, when he was deposed. Still a controversial figure today in the opinion of Brazilians, Getúlio Vargas created a strong personality cult around himself and these years were marked by intense propaganda and a forging of an idealized national identity. Villa-Lobos participated actively in this process, particularly in the definition of the musical portion of this identity, as it will be shown in the next chapter. Especially after the creation of the Department of Press and Propaganda in 1939, the regime was marked by brutal censorship of anyone who opposed the official version of the facts.

The creation of a mandatory curriculum of moral and civic education is a perfect example of how the Vargas administration sought to shape the past and present national identity. In his doctoral dissertation, Márcio Fagundes Alves wrote:

Having as objective the patriotic formation of the Brazilian citizen, Moral and Civic Instruction was established as a general topic for the education curriculum, promoting topics that should emphasize traditions associated with a homogeneous past, with glorious deeds by famous historical characters in the fight for the defense of national territory and unity. Such topics should not be limited to a single school subject; should permeate all of them, encompassing the study of the duties of the individual, as a citizen, in his relation to the homeland and mankind.⁷⁰

Talking specifically about the teaching of history, Guy de Hollanda affirms that, from the beginning of the 1930s, it became clear to legislators that the study of history could be the most effective tool for political education.⁷¹ This resulted in a distorted view of the Brazilian history that became a hallmark of the repressive Vargas regime.

The country went through a re-democratization process and a new constitution immediately following the *Era Vargas*, but Getúlio Vargas rose to power again in 1951, this time through the electoral process. His final years in power ended tragically in 1954, with him ending his life while still in office after an intense campaign by the opposition, asking for him to surrender the presidency.

This brief but turbulent democratic moment was again interrupted in 1964 by yet another military coup, followed by two decades of violent oppression and censorship that was promoted by yet another regime that tried to mold the national identity in accordance to its own political interests. The heroic image of many famous Brazilians of the past

⁷⁰ Márcio Fagundes Alves, “A Reconstrução da Identidade Nacional na Era Vargas: Práticas e Rituais Cívicos e Nacionalistas Impressos na Cultura do Grupo Escolar José Rangel/ Juiz de Fora/ Minas Gerais (1930 – 1945)” (Phd diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2010) , 71.

⁷¹ Guy de Hollanda, *Um quarto de século de programas e compêndios de História para o ensino secundário brasileiro. 1931-1956* (Rio de Janeiro: INEP/Ministério da Educação, 1957), 18.

created during the Vargas years worked perfectly for this purpose, so no attempt was made to change the official history, with efforts in favor of revisionism being violently repressed. These years of military dictatorship were marked by the slogan “Brazil, love it or leave it!”

Only in 1985 was democracy restored, finally giving the historians the room to start to question the established official history. A great deal of this work is still underway, such as in the field of Brazilian music. This is especially true when studying the composer whose image was defined during the Vargas regime, Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Any Brazilian that learned about Heitor Villa-Lobos in school a couple of decades ago was presented with an image of a quasi-superhuman, self-taught genius who spent his youth traveling through the rainforest and other regions of the country while collecting folk material, and who effortlessly, and without any outside influence, created Brazilian art music discovering or inventing on his own many of the same new modernist techniques pioneered by composers like Igor Stravinsky and his contemporaries. This myth is not far from the image that many Brazilians still have today of this “national music hero” even though, as the previous chapter has shown, there has been a number of attempts at creating a Brazilian nationalist style decades before Villa-Lobos was born.

It was especially in the 1990s, as a result of a reaction against positivist scholarship⁷², that many studies began to challenge the romantic depictions of Villa-Lobos that had been perpetuated up to this point in history. New data about Villa-Lobos’ life started to appear, stemming from research in many different fields such as

⁷² Positivism has been criticized by many such as Max Morkheimer as being too reductionist for the study of human social interactions, and that its interpretations of society were always artificially conservative, and in this way not helpful for challenging the status quo.

anthropology⁷³, history of education⁷⁴, and of course, musicology.⁷⁵ This allowed for a much more critical understanding of his biography. One fascinating account of this process can be found by studying the many editions of Vasco Mariz's biography of Villa-Lobos, perhaps one of his most important chroniclers.

Originally published as *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro* in 1949⁷⁶, the first edition resembles much more of an homage than a proper biographical study. This is understandable when one analyzes the context in which the book was written. When Mariz first met Villa-Lobos, he was a twenty-five-year-old diplomat, and Villa Lobos had already cemented his standing as the leading composer and, as this and the next chapter will demonstrate, had a fully formed mythology, created and controlled mostly by the composer himself. Mariz explained, in a later edition, that beyond being intimidated by the composer, he also felt pressured by most of the academic and musical community, who largely subscribed to the official history of Villa-Lobos at that time. He states that “the book was immature because, in my youth (I was 25), it was difficult not to give into the deliberate⁷⁷ advice of friends and colleagues interested in the topic.”⁷⁸ Later on, he explains that, even though he made a great effort to not be biased by the strong impression that the meetings with Villa-Lobos had on him, much of what he discussed in that first edition was based solely on information the composer gave the young diplomat

⁷³ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2003).

⁷⁴ Rita de Cássia Fucci Amato, “Villa-Lobos, Nacionalismo E Canto Orfeônico: Projetos Musicais E Educativos No Governo Vargas,” *Revista HISTEDBR On-line*, Campinas, n.27, p.210 –220 (September 2007).

⁷⁵ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009).

⁷⁶ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Divisão Cultural do Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 1949).

⁷⁷ Mariz here is being polite, and perhaps a little ironic.

⁷⁸ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 8.

in interviews. As it will be explored throughout this chapter, Villa-Lobos personal accounts were not necessarily a reliable source of biographical information.

Even though the first edition of the book advocated for the so-called “official” image of Villa-Lobos, the composer still became angry with the author because he related a story that made him look rough and impatient with children, even though the story is truthful and was told to Mariz by Villa-Lobos himself. This is a good example of how much Villa-Lobos was actively engaged in the construction and maintenance of his image. Mariz is, nevertheless, the most important Villa-Lobos biographer and responsible for bringing to light many important facts about Villa-Lobos life, starting with the composer’s true birthdate, March 5, 1887. For the last half-century, Mariz reviewed and updated his book, with the final 12th edition being released in 2004, creating an invaluable chronology of the evolution of perceptions about of Villa-Lobos.

As such, it is of absolute importance to carefully examine the events surrounding his childhood and his youth, as well as his first trips to Europe, because it is during these years that he developed the nationalist style for which he is best known.

2.

The most controversial events of Villa-Lobos’ biography date from childhood and early adulthood, in great part because of the poor official record-keeping in Brazil during the beginning of the twentieth-century, but also because of conflicting accounts about his life from different people. The issue surrounding his birthdate is a good example of how complicated it has been to clarify the facts around this period of his life.

Brazil did not have a general registry of births when Villa-Lobos was born, and much research was necessary to determine the precise date. His biographies used to cite dates that ranged from 1881 to 1891. Interviews with Villa-Lobos also offered conflicting dates, but the composer seems to have eventually settled on the year 1888 when he produced a summary and “authentic” biography for the special edition in his honor of the Brazilian magazine *Música Viva* (Year I, n. 7/8, January 1941). Yet, attached to his marriage license, there is a statement written by his mother that affirms that he was born in 1886, even though this date is contradicted by simple math, for the license is dated on 1913, but it says that the groom was 28 years old.

It was only in 1947 that Vasco Mariz found his baptism certificate in the São José church in Rio de Janeiro. This document from 1889 shows his birthdate as being March 5, 1887. Being so much closer to the actual date than any other, this document has been recently accepted as offering the most reliable date. This date was also confirmed by a 1941 account by conductor Nicolas Slonimsky who, in a visit to Rio de Janeiro, found the same information in the registry of applications for the Pedro II School, which Villa-Lobos attended.⁷⁹

The difficulty in finding reliable sources about the first years of his life, as exemplified by the inconsistencies regarding his birthdate, is one of the reasons why it was so difficult to challenge the mythical accounts surrounding his life. Thanks to many recent biographical studies published in the last decades, much was already clarified.

Villa-Lobos’s father, Raúl, was a crucial figure in the composer’s musical formation. Son of Spanish immigrants who came to Brazil via Cuba and entered the

⁷⁹ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 14-15.

country through the Amazon region, he started studying medicine but had to stop due to financial reasons. He wrote books about history and textbooks for schools, translated English technical books and had a pronounced interest in the legends and tales of the Indigenous Brazilians, but his greatest passion was always music. He was constantly going to the opera, was one of the founders of the Rio de Janeiro's Symphonic Club, organized musical gatherings at his house, and played the clarinet and the cello.

Villa-Lobos' mother, Noêmia, came from a more traditional Portuguese family that had achieved some economic stability importing salted cod fish. After her mother's death, she lived with an aunt because her father, a musician, faced some serious financial problems, a reason why she would later on oppose her son's musical career.⁸⁰

Heitor was the second of eight children, and the only one of his brothers to reach mature age. Many books affirm that he was the only one to show musical inclination, and Mariz' book is not different.⁸¹ But nothing much different could be expected. Of Raúl and Noêmia's four surviving children, his only other brother died at the young age of 23. His surviving sisters most likely lived under Noêmia's strict supervision, and were discouraged from pursuing music. A musical career at that time was viewed as an activity for bohemians with loose morals, a prejudice that was aggravated by Noêmia's memory of her musician father's financial woes. She tried to exert the same control on Heitor and guide him away from a musical career but, with him having the support of his father, she was not successful. Even on the choice of the name Noêmia had to bend to her husband's

⁸⁰ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 16-17.

⁸¹ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 35.

will. She intended to name the baby Túlio, but had to settle for a nickname based on that name, Tuhú, which stuck with him for all his life.

Since early in young Heitor's life, Raúl decided to take charge of his education and tried to interest him in many of his own different areas of research, such as Indigenous folklore and geography, but Heitor always lacked discipline, something that was a constant source of worry for his father. Raul also started to work on his son's musical education at an early age, famously teaching him to play the violoncello with the help of a modified viola. A year after starting these lessons, he was already able to improvise simple melodies and play nursery rhymes, which would become a major source of inspiration throughout his musical life.

Another major figure in these formative years, before Heitor was even ten years old, was his aunt Zizinha, an enthusiastic pianist that harbored a life-long love for the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, especially the Well-Tempered Clavier. This music caused a deep impact on the young Heitor and much about this first encounter of Villa-Lobos and Bach became a part of his myth. The story told in his early biographies claimed that, on his first hearings of Bach, he immediately realized that there were similar elements between Bach's music and Brazilian popular music, which would later inspire his *Bachianas* (1930 – 1945).⁸² This fantastic story about the composer having almost supernatural musical intuition as a very young boy is one that was questioned early in the revision of his biography. In fact, Mariz removed this very telling phrase

⁸² Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itaiaia, 1989), 39.

from later editions of his book: “The boy sensed even a relation between these two such distinct musical styles...”⁸³

There is a recurring theme of predestination surrounding the myth about Villa-Lobos, and this attempt to portray the young composer as a prodigy genius is a good example. An examination in retrospect of Villa-Lobos’ biography shows that this theme of predestination is part of an attempt to retroactively transform key moments of his life into the building blocks of a national myth. Villa-Lobos was certainly responsible for creating this aura about himself, and his later prominent position in the Vargas regime gave him all the necessary tools. In a short essay entitled “My Philosophy,” Villa-Lobos claimed to believe that predestination was not only something unique to him, but something that was characteristic of every “true” artist: “The true artist, the artist with capital “A,” one who is cultured, highly educated, or has multiple degrees, is always a predestined person.”⁸⁴

One of the best recent biographies about Villa-Lobos invokes the theme of predestination in its subtitle. Paulo Renato Guérios’ *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*⁸⁵ is perhaps the most important book to shine a critical light on Villa-Lobos’ life, providing a healthy dose of skepticism. The subtitle of the book refers to a phrase used in another short essay written by the composer: “the sinuous path of predestination” As Guérios argues, the phrase clearly demonstrates how Villa-Lobos used

⁸³ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Divisão Cultural do Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 1949), 26.

⁸⁴ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Minha Filosofia*, in *Presença de Villa-Lobos*, volume 3 (Rio de Janeiro: MEC/Museu Villa-Lobos, 1969), 119.

⁸⁵ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009).

the notion of predestination in a romantic and flexible context.⁸⁶ Villa-Lobos believed, or at least claimed to believe in many occasions, that he was predestined to be the creator of a distinctly Brazilian style of art music, as well as the champion of Brazilian musical heritage. The famous expression plays with the meaning of the word predestination, making it sound like a negotiation between the romantic nationalist myth that he actively created and promoted, and the sinuous path taken by his real life.

Probably the most romanticized events in Villa-Lobos' life are his many trips to the Brazilian hinterland. Some authors have tried to link his interest in developing a nationalist style to a nearly one year long trip his family took through the interior of the state of Minas Gerais when he was five years old, even though the boy was probably too young to remember much of it. The trip was not planned and it was prompted because of an accusation, dropped later, that his father had been stealing books from work. Manuel Negwer explains that the claim that the five-year-old Villa-Lobos immersed himself in the music of popular artist is an exaggeration, if not true at all. Nevertheless, the author suggests that this trip may have cultivated in him a sense of nostalgia for the music of the countryside which fueled his later interest on popular and vernacular forms of music.⁸⁷ Yet, the romantic retelling of this trip pales in comparison to the wild stories about the trips he would take in later years, as we shall see later in this chapter.

At age eleven, Villa-Lobos started his music training which included playing the cello and clarinet. It was around this time that he first came into contact with the music of the Northeast region of the country, by accompanying his father to musical encounters at

⁸⁶ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Apologia a Arte*, in *Presença de Villa-Lobos*, volume 3 (Rio de Janeiro: MEC/Museu Villa-Lobos, 1969), 104.

⁸⁷ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 21.

the house of Alberto Brandão, a meeting place for musicians and folklorists in Rio. The Northeast region of Brazil has one of the richest popular and folk traditions in the country, and most of it was still very little known by the population of the Southeast. This first experience is fairly well-documented and apparently influential, even though it would still take a few more years for Villa-Lobos to visit the region himself

It is not exactly clear when Villa-Lobos started learning to play the guitar, but it is likely that it was not until after the premature death of his father by smallpox in 1899. His father's death gave him more freedom to start his close relationship with the *chorões*, the troubadours that performed the popular music genre known as *choro* in Rio de Janeiro, and with the instrument of choice of the young Brazilian bohemians, the guitar. His mother, who disliked her son's desire to become a professional musician, strongly opposed his involvement with these musical groups, who bourgeois families of Rio de Janeiro associated with a life free of responsibilities, drinking, and criminality.

The first of such groups in which Villa-Lobos participated was the one led by Quincas Laranjeiras, which used to meet at the *Cavaquinho de Ouro* (The Golden Cavaquinho⁸⁸) music store, where musicians would pass the time while waiting for job offers. Because of his mother's strong disapproval, Villa-Lobos was forced to spend some time in an aunt's house, but it is clear that in the end there was no obstacle to his growing passion for this genre of music. In fact, years later he would title one of his two most important collections of compositions "*Chôros*." It is interesting to note that Villa-Lobos was seen as an outsider by these groups of popular musicians who nicknamed him

⁸⁸ *Cavaquinho* is a small four-string instrument of the guitar family that is almost always present in both *choro* and *samba* ensembles.

“Classical Guitar”⁸⁹, a diametrically opposed position to the image that he would cultivate years later in Paris, as the outsider popular music composer amongst the art song musicians.

It was in this period that Villa-Lobos met some of the musicians that would shape his perception of Brazilian urban popular music. There is no doubt Villa-Lobos had plenty of contact with the *chorões*, and his knowledge of the style was never questioned. Yet, his personal friendship with these musicians appears to have been exaggerated, and recollections about Villa-Lobos by many of these popular musicians and *choro* aficionados seem to be too rich in details, questionable in many occasions, for describing someone who was seen as an outsider. Because all these memories were collected in interviews after Villa-Lobos became famous, it is possible that they were also exaggerations. An example is the document by Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto, whose proximity to Villa-Lobos was questioned by Guérios especially after Pinto claims that when he met Villa-Lobos, the composer was playing the violin, an instrument never played by the composer.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, amongst these popular musicians that had contact with Villa-Lobos during this period were Donga, João Pernambuco, Chiquinha Gonzaga and Ernesto Nazareth. There was also Catulo da Paixão Cearense, the first one to be invited to perform in concert halls and official events⁹¹, and in doing so, becoming a major figure in the promotion of Brazilian popular music amongst the urban elite in the 1900s.

⁸⁹ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 51.

⁹⁰ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 44.

⁹¹ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 29.

It is also around this time that Villa-Lobos started working as a professional musician, dividing his time between playing guitar with the *chorões* and playing his violoncello in small theaters, movie theaters, and restaurants. His first compositions are from these years, essentially popular tunes or dance music for the guitar. Most of these were either lost, or allegedly destroyed by the composer years later.⁹²

The recurring problem of dating Villa-Lobos's music starts with his very first compositions. If one is to believe the composer's chronological account, he would have composed 54 pieces including: 7 string quartets, 5 solo pieces for violin, 2 for piano, 3 for violoncello, 7 for guitar, 1 piano trio, and 3 orchestral works between 1904 and 1908. Many authors agree that this it is very unlikely given the amount of knowledge, skill and experience that would have been necessary to author such an impress body of work at such a young age. Many of these are lost, and many scholars suggest that the dates given in the list may refer to the date in which the composer first conceived of the idea for a particular piece not the date of its completion. Back-dating works based on their "spiritual conception" was unfortunately a practice that Villa-Lobos would maintain for the first decades of his career, further complicating our ability to determine the provenance of a particular piece.

3.

The need for money after the death of his father also resulted in Villa-Lobos selling his father's library. This was another point of contention with his mother, who

⁹² Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 22.

firmly believed he was using this money to impress his new musician friends. Nevertheless, the money he made from these books sales financed his first major trip across Brazil in 1905, which lasted for about a year. In the following years Villa-Lobos took additional trips in which he got to know a great deal of the country, and was introduced to different cultures and folk practices. The romanticized accounts of these trips are central to the image he tried to cultivate about himself during his first visit to Europe years later, as it will be discussed below. Despite exaggerations, these trips did provide him first-hand contact with many more folk forms of music expression than those known by previous composers, even if the wild stories that were published about those days are simply not true, especially those about his contact with Indigenous people.

One of these inaccurate accounts tells that, for this first trip, Villa-Lobos joined the Luis Cruls expedition into the Amazonian rainforest, an event that was easily disproved, even in Villa-Lobos' lifetime, given the precise records made of this expedition. His alleged "field research" into Indigenous cultures has been criticized by many who believe that he worked mainly in libraries and archives, using the work of other researchers and their collected materials, especially the recordings made by Roquette-Pinto from which Villa-Lobos borrowed many of the Indigenous melodic themes he would later use in his compositions. In fact, Roquette-Pinto's widow famously accused Villa-Lobos of never having met an Indigenous person inside the tropical rainforest in his life.⁹³ Authors like Negwer further contend that Villa-Lobos did not have access to any of these recordings until after he returned from his first trip to Europe in the

⁹³ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 50.

1920's.⁹⁴ Also, even though many still believe in this myth of the composer traveling and discovering Brazil, “there are no sources to any field note or memoirs written by the composer himself regarding his collecting of the songs, just as there are no sketches of these songs in his archive.”⁹⁵

Villa-Lobos accounts of this trip are many times contradictory. The extensive itinerary he supplied for his first trip is difficult to believe, covering more than one thousand kilometers through some extremely difficult terrains. Recent scholarship suggests that many of the details he used when telling his tall tales about this trip years later were inspired and informed by stories he heard from his brother-in-law, Romeu Bergmann, who worked for two years as a telegraph operator for the Rondon Expedition through the Amazon region.⁹⁶ Negwer and Guérios are particularly skeptical of this itinerary, but also point out that the whole truth will never be known due to the lack of reliable evidence.

His next trip, when he moved to the city of Paranaguá, a port city in the state of Paraná, around 1908, is better documented, even though there is no reliable source to explain the reason for the move. Furthermore, Guérios affirms that the accounts of his stay in Paranaguá “do not say anything about the composer searching from an early age to enrich his knowledge of folk traditions by traveling throughout the country.”⁹⁷ Villa-Lobos returned to Rio de Janeiro in 1909 where he performed a concert with Ernesto

⁹⁴ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 159.

⁹⁵ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 36.

⁹⁶ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 53.

⁹⁷ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 74.

Nazareth. On that occasion, he was listed as “maestro” even though he was only 22, and was featured separately from the students that were also a part of the presentation. It is after this concert that Villa-Lobos appears to have finally decided to dedicate his time entirely to music.

At this point in his life, he had already written some noteworthy pieces and started studying composition and harmony with Frederico Nascimento and Agnelo França. His individualist spirit and questioning nature always made the student-teacher relationship complicated, and these experiences were all short-lived. The recently discovered *Cânticos Sertanejos* (1907) for small orchestra is from this period and is a good example of the early inclination Villa-Lobos had toward popular and folk music.

In contrast to his predecessors, Villa-Lobos trailed a distinct path, moving from popular to art music, not the other way around. In *Cânticos Sertanejos*, he tried to depict a Brazilian musical setting through his use of regional popular musical forms, only borrowing orchestral instrumentation from art music.⁹⁸ The piece differs greatly from what he did in later years because, besides the use of the orchestra, there are very few elements from art music, which make these early works sound like simple orchestral arrangements of popular music. Nevertheless, this already constituted a departure from the early compositions of his predecessors, which were almost entirely in the European art music style, borrowing but a few elements from the popular music repertory.

Very little is known about Villa-Lobos activities between 1910 and 1911 when he joined Luis Moreira’s travelling operetta company as a cellist. This job prompted his last and most argued about trip through the North and Northeast of Brazil. Fanciful accounts

⁹⁸ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia, 1989), 58.

of this trip, which will be discussed in the next chapter, were written by Lucie Delarue-Mardus and published in the magazine *Intransigente* in 1927, while Villa-Lobos was living in Paris. The exaggerated claims escalated to such a degree that they almost ended the composer's long friendship with the noted writer and intellectual Mário de Andrade.

It is known and well documented that the composer traveled all the way north to the city of Manaus, capital of Amazonas, in the North region of Brazil and in the middle of the Amazonian rainforest. The company expected to find a favorable performing environment in the city which had had a solid artistic circuit, made possible by government patronage resulting from the prosperous golden years of the Amazon Rubber Boom.⁹⁹ However, in 1912, the boom had come to an abrupt end and the city found itself in the middle of a severe economic crisis so such patronage was no longer available.¹⁰⁰ It is not clear if the operetta company dissolved in Recife, in the Northeast state of Pernambuco; or shortly after arriving in Manaus. However, it is generally believed that it was around this time that Villa-Lobos met his travel friend Romeu Donizetti, and started performing as a freelance musician to pay for his travels. In later years, a couple of articles in Europe would recount these travels as full of wild adventures that included interactions with Indigenous populations, long expeditions into the rainforest, being captured by cannibals, and allegedly learning melodies from birds that no one else has been able to identify.

⁹⁹ From 1879 to 1912, the so called "First Rubber Cycle" was a period of fast growth of the remote cities of the Amazon forest such like Manaus, Porto Velho, and Belém; made possible by the extraction of latex and commercialization of rubber.

¹⁰⁰ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 77.

All of the above-mentioned stories have been discredited by scholarship, especially by Negwer¹⁰¹ and Guérios.¹⁰² Villa-Lobos also exaggerated the number of songs he supposedly collected during these travels, with some accounts claiming more than a thousand tunes.¹⁰³ There is no question that he collected valuable musical material in the field, but if he did so in such a large scale, its documentation did not survive and was never published.

Even if not venturing through uncharted rainforest in the romanticized fashion of the heroic explorer, Villa-Lobos most certainly came into contact with many types of Brazilian folk music from different cultures during all of his travels. He was also able to witness an astoundingly diverse fauna and flora, something that created an impression that remained with the composer for the rest of his life. Even simple and likely experiences like visiting a fish market in Manaus, or meeting the *ribeirinho* populations that resided on the margins of great rivers, were fundamental for the composer's idea of Brazil that was taking form during these years. There is no question that the music and life of the North and Northeast had a deep impact on the young composer. He was also able to develop a deeper acquaintance with Brazilian musical and cultural practices of African descent, given that their influence on the music of urban centers, together with religious manifestations originally brought from the African continent, were much more a part of urban life in the northeastern states than on the Southeast of Brazil, where Villa-Lobos grew up.

¹⁰¹ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009).

¹⁰² Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009).

¹⁰³ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 57.

The extent of Villa-Lobos contact with Indigenous cultures is what is not clear, even today, and it will probably never be. Today, it is widely believed that his interactions with Indigenous Brazilians were probably limited to the few that he would encounter in the cities of the North. The few Indigenous groups that survived colonization lived far away from urban areas, in remote parts of the rainforest, and accessing these parts of the country was extremely difficult. Therefore, it is more likely that his contact with the Indigenous source material he used in his compositions came through other secondary sources, as discussed earlier. It is well-known that the composer was greatly impressed by the music collected by Roquette-Pinto¹⁰⁴, from which he extracted the Indigenous music used for the composition of two of the *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*. It is also worth noting that his father was interested in legends and folklore from the Amazonian region, where his parents first lived when they arrived to Brazil, so he might have learned about some of these traditions as a child.

His exaggerations about his alleged first-hand experiences with Indigenous Brazilians were in great part a matter of personal marketing during the next two decades of his life, as will be discussed in the next chapter. Yet, the image of the intrepid musicologist/explorer created as part of that self-aggrandizing myth lasted for decades. The complete lack of documentation of these trips is made worse for the absence of correspondence with anyone, including his mother who, believing that her son was dead after such a long time with no news, had already commissioned a mass for his soul before his return to Rio.

¹⁰⁴ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 52.

Later in 1912 Villa-Lobos met the pianist Lucília Guimarães, who he married the next year, and who entirely shifted his career as a musician. 1912 – 1917 is the first important period of Villa-Lobos' work as a composer, and it was a period of maturation when he would begin to discover his voice as a composer. By the end of 1916, he claimed to have over one hundred compositions in his catalogue. It was during these years that he started taking piano lessons from Lucília, and this prompted a lifelong passion with the instrument. These years were also marked by the first formal concerts featuring his music and by the beginning of a complicated relationship with music critics.

In 1912, Villa-Lobos discovered the *Cours de Composition Musicale* by Vincent d'Indy, a student of César Franck. The book had a great impact on the young composer who would develop a life-time admiration for the French author. It is also in this year that he started working in one of his first large-scale compositions, the opera *Izaht* (1913), which would not be premiered until 1940. This opera exhibits clear influence of Wagnerian harmony and Puccini's melodic lines, two composers Villa-Lobos was studying in depth during these years.¹⁰⁵

Not surprisingly, the most important and marked influence on Villa-Lobos' music from this period is from France, and specifically from Claude Debussy. Even though throughout his life Villa-Lobos made a point of claiming that he avoided being influenced by any other composer, the Debussy-like style of these first pieces is undeniable. In 1913, Villa-Lobos was able to watch presentations of the Russian Ballet in Rio performing Russian compositions and Debussy's *L'Après Midi d'un Faune* (1894),

¹⁰⁵ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 66.

which created a deep impression on him.¹⁰⁶ He then wrote compositions with French titles and art songs composed on French texts, and the thematic choice for works such as *O Gato e o Rato* (1914) reveal sympathy for the impressionistic esthetic.

Another influence that can be heard in the compositions of this period, especially in the larger scale works, is the rhythmic fervor found in the early pre-Stravinsky Russian ballets, and the heterogeneity of the style proved ideal to express Villa-Lobos many different musical ideas. The first work that points toward the future nationalist Brazilian style, *Danças Características Africanas* (1914), is a good representation of the encounter of French impressionist harmony and melodies with the rhythmic enthusiasm of the Russian ballets, and both in service of the expression of Brazilian musical material. This piece is a preview of the path Villa-Lobos' music would take on the next decade, but it would take a few more years before his music would rise above Debussy's influence.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 38.

¹⁰⁷ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 41-44.

Chapter 4: HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS: BRAZILIAN COMPOSER

In November 1915, the first public concert featuring Villa-Lobos' music was organized at the auditorium of the *Jornal do Comércio* newspaper. In the beginning of the year, he had already performed in a few concerts with his wife and presented a preview of that first public concert in a private gathering for guests and journalists. For this official debut as a composer, he chose to present a few solo piano pieces and chamber compositions, including some songs sung by the baritone Frederico Nascimento Filho. The chosen pieces show a strong influence of the French post-romantic aesthetic of composers like Saint-Saëns and Debussy. This was particularly the case for the songs, two of which were settings of French poetry.

The use of techniques associated with Debussy, something that Villa-Lobos tried to downplay for most of his life, is especially evident in the use of the whole-tone scales in many pieces composed during this time. Two clear examples are the *Danças Características Africanas* from 1914 and, above all, the collection of piano pieces *A Prole do Bebê* (1918) directly and openly inspired by Debussy's *Children's Corner* (1906 - 1908).¹⁰⁸

In the Rio de Janeiro of the 1910s, the music of Debussy was considered modern and vanguardist. Brazilian "establishment" composers had all studied in Europe before Debussy gained notoriety, at the height of Wagner's popularity. If Villa-Lobos wanted to prove himself more capable and different from his peers, choosing the latest style from

¹⁰⁸ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 128.

Europe was an attractive option, one that, as it will be discussed, was key to his acceptance as a serious composer in Brazil. This need for acceptance could also explain why he was so tentative in the use of Brazilian popular and folk music elements during this time period, given that these were considered of lesser artistic value by Rio's high society and intelligentsia. As Guérios explains: ". . . it becomes clear that the particularities, expectations, and pressures of [Rio's] social environment exerted a great influence over Villa-Lobos."¹⁰⁹ Despite this pressure, Villa-Lobos still chose to innovate, becoming one of the first Brazilian composers to write in a "modern" style, still new to most *cariocas*¹¹⁰, an audacity that would set off his often contentious decades-long relationship with local music critics.

While it is true that Villa-Lobos had a lot of trouble with critics, especially in Rio de Janeiro, this fact is also at times overstated. His early concerts did not generate much criticism or debate as suggested by Mariz.¹¹¹ As Guérios argues, the controversies only started years later, after the composer gained much greater notoriety.¹¹²

A leading critic in Rio at that time was Oscar Guanabara, already mentioned in the discussion about Nepomuceno in chapter 2. Like most of the critics, Guanabara initially recognized the abilities and potential of the new composer, but warned against the influence of "frantic artists that intend to reform the human soul, deviating from its

¹⁰⁹ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 126-133.

¹¹⁰ Carioca – Person born in Rio de Janeiro

¹¹¹ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itaipava, 1989), 69-70.

¹¹² Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 137.

natural tendency.”¹¹³ Apparently, to Guanabara, Italian bel canto was the natural musical expression of the human soul, and the style that Villa-Lobos was trying to emulate was bordering on heresy. The insistence of the composer on this new aesthetic earned him the reputation of a rebel, a sort of *enfant terrible* of Brazilian art music. The critic’s opposition to Villa-Lobos intensified a great deal some years later when the composer began to systematically include elements from Brazilian folk and popular music in his compositions.

Other early chamber works were presented in two recitals in 1917, and it was in this same year that Alberto Nepomuceno included Villa-Lobos’ *Elegie* (1914) in a concert organized by the *Sociedade de Concertos Sinfônicos* where Nepomuceno acted as principal conductor of the orchestra. He also demanded that his publishers start printing Villa-Lobos music, and had one of Villa-Lobos’ compositions printed on the back of the edition of one of his own works. As mentioned before, Nepomuceno was instrumental in paving the way for the creation of a new Brazilian nationalist style by Villa-Lobos, not just for his own nationalist compositions, but also in great part because of his generosity in helping to promote composers of the younger generation.

In 1918, Villa-Lobos had the first opportunity to present some of his symphonic works in a concert promoted by the Brazilian Press Association. For this event, he selected the fourth act of *Izaht, Naufrágio de Kleonicos* (1916), the *Prelúdio Sinfônico* [date unknown]¹¹⁴, and the symphonic poems *Tédio de Alvorada* (1916) and *Mirêmis*

¹¹³ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 88-89.

¹¹⁴ Negwer mentioned this syphonic prelude, found in the program for the concert, but gives no additional information. This piece is not found in the current catalogs of Villa-Lobos compositions and the score was probably lost.

(1916). The score of *Mirêmis* is now lost, but it was reworked into the famous Ballet *Amazonas*.¹¹⁵ This concert was met with much resistance, not only from the audience and the critics, but from the orchestra members who threatened not to play many times during the rehearsal process. The concert was also a financial fiasco, although it did help to promote the young composer's name. An important consequence of this concert was the attention Villa-Lobos received from other artists, especially from the young writers Ronald de Carvalho and Renato Almeida.¹¹⁶ This growing admiration from the Brazilian artistic vanguard eventually earned him an invitation to the *Semana da Arte Moderna* of 1922.

Years before this invitation, in 1918, Villa-Lobos met the pianist Arthur Rubinstein, who would become a very important connection and influence in this early period of his career.¹¹⁷ After a troubled introduction, Rubinstein was very impressed by Villa-Lobos' music and promoted his compositions in recitals all over the world. Some of Villa-Lobos best piano works were composed specifically for Rubinstein, most notably the suite *Prole do Bebê* (1918), which became part of the pianist's permanent repertory.

After a sixth concert of his music, featuring chamber works, Villa-Lobos was invited to participate in an official concert in celebration of the return of the newly elected president, Epitácio Pessoa, who in 1919 had led the Brazilian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference which culminated with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and the official end of World War I. For this occasion, three symphonies, based on poems by

¹¹⁵ Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 54.

¹¹⁶ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 72.

¹¹⁷ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 74-78.

Brazilian writer, playwright and composer Escragnolle Doria, “A Vitória” (Victory), “A Paz” (Peace), and “A Guerra (War), were commissioned to three different composers. The third poem was assigned to Nepomuceno, but after disagreements with the organization of the event, he resigned and the commission was transferred to Villa-Lobos. *A Guerra* (1919), Villa-Lobos third symphony, made the strongest impression and its success inspired the composer to write two more symphonies based on the other two. *A Vitória* (1919) became his fourth symphony, and *A Paz* (1920) is listed in his catalog as his fifth symphony, although there is no record of it having been performed nor are there any surviving scores, and it is not certain if it was ever written.¹¹⁸

This official concert marks the beginning of the recognition of Villa-Lobos as an accomplished composer. In his second visit to Brazil in 1920, the German conductor Felix Weingarter included Villa-Lobos’ *Naufrágio de Kleonicos* in his concert, the only work by a Brazilian composer. Around that time, the Brazilian singer Vera Janacópoulos and the pianist Arthur Rubinstein were also introducing his music to French and Russian musicians in Paris. Villa-Lobos next concert in June 1921, the second featuring symphonic works, was promoted by the influential socialite Laurinda Santos Lobo, whose patronage prompted members of Rio’s high society to attend a presentation of the composer’s music for the first time.

This concert marks an important point in the history of Brazilian music. In the spirit of nationalism, which was growing with the proximity of the celebration of 100 years of Brazilian Independence, Villa-Lobos made a statement by introducing himself

¹¹⁸ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009), 138.

for the first time as a “Brazilian Composer.”¹¹⁹ As Negwer writes: “A national accent marked the event, also reflected in some of the works performed that night: *Choro n. 1* (1920), *Lenda do Caboclo* (1920), *Viola* (1912-1917), and *Sertão no Estio* (1919).”¹²⁰ This concert still can’t be considered as a definitive shift of Villa-Lobos’ focus to a Brazilian nationalist style, as his next presentations proved that his interests still lied in composing music in what he believed to be the latest style from Europe.

In October of that same year, organized once again by Laurinda Santos Lobo, Villa-Lobos presented a concert that was probably the most openly influenced by the music of Debussy. The solo piano piece *A Fianadeira* (1921), the song set *Historiettes* (1920), and the *Quarteto Simbólico* (1921), later renamed simply as *Quatuor*, are all very evidently in the French impressionist style. The success of this concert infuriated the critic Guanabara, who reacted promptly by denouncing the desire to create “modern music,” which in his opinion shouldn’t even be classified as music. For him, “modern music was not only a matter of aesthetic choice; it was an assault to the human soul and even to nature itself.”¹²¹

Nevertheless, the growing affinity for modernist styles of music attracted the attention of a group of artists from São Paulo, a city that was rapidly becoming the center of Brazilian economy and urban culture. The group was organizing a whole week dedicated to modern art to take place in 1922. The poets Oswald de Andrade and Mário

¹¹⁹ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009), 142.

¹²⁰ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 83.

¹²¹ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009), 143.

de Andrade¹²² attended the concerts promoted by Ms. Laurinda in Rio de Janeiro and were evidently impressed, which resulted in one of the lead organizers of the Week of Modern Art coming to Rio a few weeks later to officially invite Villa-Lobos to participate in the festival.

Villa-Lobos' invitation to the Week of Modern Art of 1922 in São Paulo ended up by igniting in him a nationalist impetus. One of the main philosophies behind the creation of the Week of Modern Art was the liberation from older European artistic models by appropriating them and radically repurposing them, an attitude perhaps best expressed by the motto created by the poet Oswald de Andrade: "Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question."¹²³ For this group of artists, being a nationalist was a vanguardist trait.

1922 was an iconic year, the year in which Brazil celebrated one century of independence from Portugal, and there was a growing enthusiasm for the potential of the modern Brazilian nation. As art historian Aracy Amaral writes: "In the midst of the celebration of the past, a restless group, moved by the exaltation of Brazil as it faced its future, starts to form after the exposition of Anita Malfatti¹²⁴ in 1917-18, finally hatching in 1922."¹²⁵ As she explains throughout her book, Brazilian modernism presented an unusual balance between nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Villa-Lobos early music tended towards cosmopolitanism, but it is very likely that this exposure to a modernist take on nationalism fueled his desire to further explore those nationalist tendencies that already existed, albeit in a fairly restrained way, in his early music.

¹²² Not related to each other.

¹²³ Tupi is one of the most important linguistic families of Brazil, which has strongly influenced Brazilian Portuguese.

¹²⁴ Anita Malfatti (1889 – 1964) was one of the most important Brazilian painters of the twentieth-century.

¹²⁵ Aracy A. Amaral, *Artes Plásticas na Semana de 22* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 1998), 13.

For “The Week,” as it became known, Villa-Lobos composed no new music, instead presenting three chamber concerts on February 13, 15 and 17. Just like most of the other participants of at the festival, the composer was received with some applause, but also booing and turmoil, with the reception from the critics being as diverse as that of the audience. In general, critics from São Paulo were much more generous than the traditionalist critics from Rio de Janeiro, especially Guanabara who could never forgive the composer for taking part in this festival. But most of all, for Villa-Lobos, the Week served to situate him as the most notable Brazilian composer of the moment. It also marked the beginning of his long friendship with Mário de Andrade, the person responsible for the philosophical and theoretical orientation of the artistic nationalist movement in Brazil.

Mário de Andrade published his *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira*¹²⁶ a few years after the Week of Modern Art, in which he states that a Brazilian composer writing universal music, about universal themes, was not only not writing Brazilian music, but was being anti-national.¹²⁷ His opinions and beliefs played a significant role stimulating Villa-Lobos to explore new stylistic directions over the next decade.

5.

Immediately after the Week of Modern Art, a very troubled process began as friends of Villa-Lobos tried to fund the next logical step in his career, a trip to Europe. Counting with the enthusiasm of the Parisian residents Vera Janacópoulos and Arthur

¹²⁶ Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editôra, 1928).

¹²⁷ Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira*, 3rd ed. (São Paulo: Vila Rica, 1972), 4.

Rubinstein, and the support of most of Rio de Janeiro's artistic class of, a proposal was sent to the government on behalf of the composer asking for financial support for a trip and long-term stay in Paris promoting Brazilian music in foreign lands. This petition was partially accepted and only a fraction of the money was made available to the composer. Over the next year Villa-Lobos performed eight concerts, four in São Paulo and four in Rio de Janeiro, but the attention they received was unsatisfactory to say the least. Villa-Lobos was still not nearly as popular with general audiences as he was within some artistic circles. It is however through his connections in these circles that he finally found the remaining funds to travel to Paris in June 1923.

The names in the group of friends that helped to fund this first trip were a veritable who's who of artistic and high-society: Laurinda Santos Lobo, Graça Aranha, Geraldo Rocha and Olívia Guedes Penteado amongst others, but especially the industrialists Arnaldo and Carlos Guinle, who became Villa-Lobos' most important financial sponsors during the first trip to Europe.¹²⁸

The trip to Paris took place at a very different moment in his life than most other Latin American composers. Already in his mid-thirties, having an impressive catalog of compositions, and aided by a life-long anti-academic attitude, he presumptuously announced upon his arrival that he "did not come to learn, but to show what I have already done. If you like it, I'll stay; if not, I'll go back to my land."¹²⁹

Despite this attitude, Villa-Lobos was rapidly accepted by the circle of Brazilian artists that lived in Paris, and these connections allowed him to quickly know and get known by the intellectual vanguard of Paris. To celebrate the composer's arrival, the

¹²⁸ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itaipava, 1989), 92.

¹²⁹ Luiz Paulo Horta, *Villa-Lobos: Uma Introdução* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1987), 44.

Brazilian painter Tarcila do Amaral, married to the poet Oswald de Andrade, organized a dinner at their house that was attended by, amongst others, Eric Satie, Blaise Cendrars, and Jean Cocteau, the intellectual and philosophical leader of the group. After a discussion about music and improvisation, Villa-Lobos sat down at the piano to provide a few examples. After a few attempts, Cocteau criticized what he played and characterized the music as a simple imitation of Debussy and Ravel, something that infuriated the Brazilian composer and prompted a heated discussion, reaching the point of insults.¹³⁰

This episode is a good example of the type of resistance that Villa-Lobos found towards the music he had composed up to this point by Parisian residents. It was not a response to his music being “too modern,” as affirmed by Mariz in all editions of his book¹³¹, but rather a critique of Villa-Lobos’s self-described “modern” style as being perceived as rather old-fashioned by a Parisian artistic vanguard that was moving away from impressionist models. It is important to remember that in 1923, Debussy had been already dead for four years and Ravel was already past his prime and delicate of health. The greatest sensation in art music in Paris was Igor Stravinsky, a composer whose music, as discussed earlier, Villa-Lobos had yet to know intimately, despite accounts to the contrary.

This is a good place to stop and examine Villa-Lobos’ music composed on the years before he moved to Paris, as well as to discuss a few chronological issues related to the dating of his early works. The composer’s body of work is astoundingly large, and in 1920 he compiled a catalog of compositions that already listed 269 pieces. In this body of

¹³⁰ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 145-146.

¹³¹ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 97.

work, many different styles and influences can be identified, but especially towards the end of the 1910s, Debussy and the post-romantic French style tend to dominate.

There are very few compositions from this period that have a pronounced Brazilian character. Most of them are solo guitar works, very similar to what would have been played by a *chorinho* guitar player, such as the *Suite Populaire Brésilienne*¹³² and *Choro no. 1*. There are also isolated small pieces for other instruments such as *Lenda do Caboclo* for piano and the songs *Sertão no Estio*, *Viola* and *Festim Pagão* (1919). There are three other major works with Brazilian national characteristics that are attributed to this time period, but their alleged composition dates deserve a little more attention.

In 1923, another catalog of Villa-Lobos works was published on the back of the program of a recital, providing a better source for investigating this whole period because it includes the last years before his first trip to Paris. What is interesting about these catalogs is noting which compositions are not listed, which happen to be precisely the aforementioned three major nationalist works allegedly composed during this period: ballets *Amazonas* and *Uirapuru*, and the subject of this research document, the *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*. There is plenty of evidence to argue that the official composition dates of these pieces, 1917 for both ballets and 1919 for the songs, are incorrect.

The discussion about the composition date of *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* will be left for the next chapters, but much can be said about the dates of *Uirapuru* and *Amazonas*, and it mostly revolves around the question of how much familiarity with Stravinsky's music he had back in 1917, when the pieces were allegedly composed. The Stravinsky-like elements present in those two works are not hard to identify. *Uirapuru's*

¹³² Villa-Lobos dated the first pieces of this set as being composed in 1906 and 1907, but the composition dates of the *Suite Populaire Brésilienne* is heavily disputed.

musical and structural similarities to Stravinsky's *L'Oiseau de Feu* (1910), and the counterpart connection between *Amazonas* and *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913), are well documented in recent musical scholarship^{133 134}. This relationship, though, is often attributed to the composers "prodigious intuition," a term used even by Béhague, although ironically, when analyzing *Uirapuru*.¹³⁵

In this latter ballet, the similarities to Stravinsky are many. There is the choice of a story that has a mixture of primitive, fantastic and romantic elements, which Villa-Lobos also represents musically through the use of ostinatos, percussive use of strings, glissandi for the low horns, and fast and short chromatic motifs for the woodwinds. There are also other, more specific techniques that are considered a characteristic of Stravinsky's style, as is the case in the short atonal passage in measures 16 – 18 (Example 4-1), in which, as Béhague explains, the chromaticism and atonality are "minimized by pedal points, similar to early Stravinsky."¹³⁶

¹³³ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 110.

¹³⁴ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 171.

¹³⁵ Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 51.

¹³⁶ Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 54.

Example 4-1 *Uirapuru*, mm. 15-18.¹³⁷

Even though some relatively recent scholars like Peppercorn¹³⁸ have continued to suggest that Stravinsky's music was performed in Rio de Janeiro, during the 1917 visit of the Russian Ballet, other scholars have already shown that the repertory for that occasion did not include any music by the Russian composer.¹³⁹ Other theories suggest that Villa-Lobos gained access to Stravinsky's music through his friendship with other musicians, especially Arthur Rubenstein and Oswaldo Guerra. This is unlikely however, as explained in Manoel Aranha Corrêa do Lago's study about the visits of Darius Milhaud

¹³⁷ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Uirapuru*, full score (New York: Associated Music Publishers Inc., 1948), 5.

¹³⁸ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 48-49.

¹³⁹ Manoel Aranha Corrêa do Lago, *O Círculo Veloso-Guerra e Darius Milhaud no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Rerel, 2010), 83.

and his accompanying circle of musicians to Brazil in 1917-1919. This research categorically affirms that Villa-Lobos did not get acquainted with the music of Stravinsky until the 1920s, during his first visit to Paris.¹⁴⁰

Besides matters of style, there is also the issue of the very late premiere of these two works, 1929 for *Amazonas* and 1935 for *Uirapuru*, and the fact that both were also published many years after their alleged composition in 1917.¹⁴¹ All of these factors lead more recent scholarship to be more skeptical about the 1917 composition date. Guérios is absolutely clear about this when he writes that “Villa-Lobos denied the influence of Stravinsky in his works, even changing the dates in which he had them composed.”¹⁴²

Negwer develops this idea further, arguing that:

It seems that Villa-Lobos tried to make himself perceived retroactively as a “Brazilian Stravinsky,” that would have arrived, already in 1917, to similar artistic results entirely by his own efforts and without the influence of the zealous Russian maestro.¹⁴³

Based on all this evidence, it is reasonable to believe that these ballets, just like the *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* as it will be discussed in the next chapters, were only composed in the 1920s, during or after his first two visits to Paris. Without these pieces, the most important compositions of Villa-Lobos’s first compositional period are marked by a heavy influence by Debussy and by what he learned in Indy’s book, such as the *Prole do Bebê* piano suites written for Rubenstein.

¹⁴⁰ Manoel Aranha Corrêa do Lago, *O Círculo Veloso-Guerra e Darius Milhaud no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Rer, 2010), 85.

¹⁴¹ Publication in 1929 and 1948, respectively.

¹⁴² Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009), 164.

¹⁴³ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 108-109.

Something similar can be said of the *Trio para Oboé, Clarinete e Fagote*, premiered in 1924 and clearly showing Stravinsky's influence. As Guérios suggests, the similarities of style are too obvious to be considered coincidence: "Emphasis on short motifs that are rhythmic and not melodic, the inconstancy of rhythms, with a result absolutely opposite to the one achieved with music that display the impressionist techniques of Debussy."¹⁴⁴ While the piece was allegedly composed in 1921, the rebuke of Villa-Lobos' music as derivative of Debussy and Ravel upon his arrival in Paris in 1923 suggests that this date, like that of the ballets, is questionable, and likely a revisionist attempt by Villa-Lobos to create the impression that he came to the same stylistic results independently and prior to coming into contact with Stravinsky's music after his arrival in Paris

While in Paris in 1924, Villa-Lobos organized two major concerts devoted entirely to his music. Earlier in his visit, still in 1923, he had already achieved some visibility and his music was included in other concerts performed by a number of important musicians, such as the one in the *Salle des Agriculteurs* in October 1923. In April 9, 1924, Villa-Lobos music was featured in a concert together with music by Stravinsky and Milhaud. For this occasion, Villa-Lobos was joined by Janacópoulos among other notable performers, with this event also including the premiere of the *Trio para Oboé, Clarinete e Fagote*. The second and more important concert took place in May 30, sponsored by the Brazilian embassy. Also at the *Salle des Agriculteurs*, the concert featured the premiere of the *Nonetto* (1923), subtitled "Fast impression of all

¹⁴⁴ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 162.

Brazil.” The positive reception received by this piece was crucial in redirecting his interest back towards the exploration of Brazilian musical sound.

In the *Nonetto*, Villa-Lobos merges some of Stravinsky’s aesthetic elements with rhythms derived from Brazilian popular music. As with the woodwind trio, the use of Stravinsky’s style, suggests that this piece was composed while already in Paris, and not in Rio, as Carlos Kater argues.¹⁴⁵ The reception to his other pieces was not negative, and the attention that the concert in general received, and the *Nonetto* in particular, provided a good indication of the kind of music that interested Parisian audiences. Critics recognized Stravinsky’s stylistic traits in Villa-Lobos’ music, but regarded its blending with Brazilian rhythms an innovative feature by the Brazilian composer.

The fact that these musical evocations of Brazil, and the perception of Villa-Lobos as a foreign composer, afforded him more success in Paris than his earlier compositional approach became obvious, but it appears that the composer had this insight months before. When he revised the score of *Prole do Bebê*, a collection of character pieces for the piano and one of his most openly Debussyan compositions, for a performance by Tomás Terán held in February 1924, Villa-Lobos subtitled it *Légende Indigène (De la famille de bébé de Villa-Lobos)*¹⁴⁶.

The positive reception of his music by the Parisian artistic community provided an impressive seal of approval. The concert of April 1924 was part of the so-called *Concert Salades*, organized by the extremely well connected pianist and composer Jean Wiéner. The “salad concerts,” named for their eclectic nature, were an important showcase of

¹⁴⁵ Carlos Kater, “Aspectos da Modernidade de Villa-Lobos,” *Em Pauta* (Magazine from the Master of Music program from UFRGS, 1991), 58-63.

¹⁴⁶ Indian legends (From the baby Villa-Lobos’ family)

modern music that took place from 1922 to 1924. Villa-Lobos' inclusion in these concerts was a symbol of acceptance and evidence that the publicity campaign performed by Rubinstein and Janacópoulos worked well, as he had the honor to be included, as mentioned before, in a program together with works by Stravinsky and Milhaud. From this point forward Villa-Lobos had a very friendly relationship with the Parisian critics and audience that would last the rest of his life.

All the acclamation in Paris, however, did not help improve Villa-Lobos increasingly precarious financial situation. On the auspicious date of April 1st 1924, the composer wrote a letter to one of his patrons, the Brazilian industrialist Arnaldo Guinle. Villa-Lobos requested more money, but received a negative reply, along with the suggestion that he should return to Brazil, which he did before the end of that year. Mariz cites a very telling observation made by the poet Manuel Bandeira for *Ariel* magazine after interviewing the composer upon his return: "Villa-Lobos has just returned from Paris. It is expected from he who returns from Paris to come back full of Paris. However, Villa-Lobos returned from there full of Villa-Lobos." Bandeira continues to explain that, all the same, the composer was deeply impressed by Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*, telling the poet that it was the "most important musical experience of his life."¹⁴⁷

The overall result of this first Paris trip was that Villa-Lobos got an affirmation of his worth as a composer, while at the same time gaining the necessary motivation to intensify his experimentations with Brazilian music. The visit also put him in first-hand contact with Paris' musical vanguard, having met Stravinsky, his revered master D'Indy, and Edgar Varese, with whom he started a long friendship despite clear aesthetic

¹⁴⁷ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itaiaia, 1989), 97-98.

differences. The period that follows, marked by the composition of the *Chôros* series, witnessed the emergence of Villa-Lobos as a renowned Brazilian composer and the consolidation of his nationalist style, something that in great part was due to the influence of Stravinsky.

The interview by Manuel Bandeira notwithstanding, Villa-Lobos returned to Brazil in September 1924, almost unnoticed by the press. He was probably aware that the notoriety that he had achieved back in 1922 had faded. His music, with the exception of a few piano pieces, had virtually disappeared from concerts and recitals.

His first appearances in public after returning to Brazil focused more on his abilities as a conductor rather than as a composer. He also chose to pick up his Brazilian career where he left off, and went to São Paulo for these first concerts. He was invited to conduct the orchestra of the *Sociedade de Concertos Sinfônicos* for a program that only included one of his compositions. The concert took place on January 24, 1925. A couple of weeks later, on February 8 and 18, he presented two more concerts of his music, in honor of his patrons Olívia Guedes Penteado and Paulo Prado. Meanwhile, he received news from Europe that many of his works were being performed in Paris and Venice, and that he had been inducted as a member of the International Society of Contemporary Music by Albert Roussel.¹⁴⁸

The success he started to enjoy in 1925, especially after the success of the February 18 concert, continued into 1926. He was invited to present three symphonic concerts in Argentina with the Buenos Aires Association for Wagnerian Music. But the fullest recognition of Villa-Lobos as the greatest Brazilian composer took place on

¹⁴⁸ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itatiaia, 1989), 97-98.

November 15 1926, during the celebrations associated with Proclamation of the Republic Day. In this concert, presented at the *Teatro Lírico* in Rio de Janeiro, Villa-Lobos included his *Chôro No. 3* (1925) and premiered one of his most important pieces, the *Chôro No. 10* (1925). The concert was met with enormous acclaim from audiences and the critics alike.

After all this success, it was clear that Villa-Lobos needed to return to Paris, this time having a better understanding of what was expected of him as a Brazilian composer and increased awareness of Parisians' musical predilections. But the success achieved in 1925 and 1926 did not translate into financial prosperity, and the intervention of his friends was again required in order to find funding for a second trip. Arthur Rubinstein approached Carlos Guinle and proposed a two-year trip for Villa-Lobos, this time in the company of his wife, in order to promote his compositions in Europe and supervise their publication. Rubinstein appealed to the industrialist's ego, as the pianist himself explained:

. . . I suddenly asked my host: "Would you like to be celebrated after your death, Carlos?" I continued, "Archduke Rudolph, Prince Lichnowski, and Count Waldstein would have been forgotten had they not had the good fortune to understand and appreciate the music of Beethoven and have an important role in his life as his patrons."¹⁴⁹

This quote clearly demonstrates how much potential Rubenstein saw in Villa-Lobos. The appeal obviously worked because Carlos Guinle did not only finance the trip for the couple and lent them his apartment in Place St. Michel, but subsidized the first editions of his works with Eschig Publications. Villa-Lobos, this time with his wife Lucília, arrived again in Paris in the end of 1926.

¹⁴⁹ Arthur Rubinstein, *My many years* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 172.

During this second visit, the composer exhibited quite a different attitude and was much less defensive and more concerned with practical matters. To keep on his budget, he started working as a reviewer for Eschig Publications and took on some students. He also expanded his already impressive circle of friends, gathering with them in his apartment for a taste of Brazil's national dish, *feijoada*. In fact, he presented himself more as Brazilian than ever, and in the opinion of many of his colleagues back home, as the type of Brazilian that most Europeans expected; or, to use the title of one of the sections of Negwer's book, "a savage from the tropical jungle."¹⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, most if not all of the wild and exaggerated stories about his youth seem to have taken shape during this second Parisian stay.

By the end of 1927, his new Brazilian nationalist style came into its own with two concerts at the *Salle Gaveau*, which featured many of the greatest performers of Paris and including a number of premieres. In the first concert, on October 24, he presented the *Chôros No. 4* (1926) and *Chôros No. 8* (1925), the piece dedicated to and performed by Rubinstein, *Rudepoema* (1926), and five songs from *Seréstas* (1925) for voice and orchestra. In the December 5 concert that followed, he premiered the second installment of his piano suite series, *Prole do Bebê No. 2* (1921), also performing *Três Poemas Indígenas* (1926) for voice and orchestra and his *Chôros No. 3* and *No. 10*. The exuberance and power of this new repertory made a deep impression and was praised by the Parisian audiences. As Henry Prunières, writing for the *Revue Musicale* put it, "It is the first time in Europe that one hears works coming from Latin America that bring with

¹⁵⁰ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fonte, 2009), 154.

them the wonders of virgin forests, of great plains, of an exuberant nature, profuse in dazzling fruits, flowers, and birds...”¹⁵¹

Chôros No. 10, scored for chorus and orchestra, is one of the best examples of this newly consolidated nationalist style. Featuring modernist harmonies and bold effects of timbre, the first part of the piece begins with the tentative appearances of short motifs borrowed from Roquette-Pinto’s recordings of Indigenous Brazilian music, or in imitation of the calls of Brazilian songbirds, a representation of Brazil’s natural beauty. The second half, representing the people of Brazil, slowly evolves into a frenzy, with an ostinato based on an Indigenous theme, sung by the chorus, which is combined with a lyrical popular melody from the Northeast written by Anacleto de Medeiros.

It is during this time that Villa-Lobos also earned the title of “The White Indian,” a nickname reinforced by an article written by the poet Lucie Delarue-Mardrus a little before the October 1927 performance. In this article for the *Intransigent*, entitled: “Adventures of a Composer – Music of Cannibals,” she wrote wild tales about the composer’s travels through Brazil, famously including a story regarding the inspiration behind *Três Poemas Indígenas*, which allegedly was based on songs he heard during his travels in the Amazon region, while in a trance, tied to a post, as cannibals were getting ready to eat him.

There was much speculation about how Delarue arrived at such a bizarre narrative. The stories are very like the ones told by Hans Staden, who travelled South America in the sixteenth-century.¹⁵² One possibility is that Delarue may have fallen prey

¹⁵¹ Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil’s Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 19.

¹⁵² Even Staden’s stories are considered a fabrication by many modern scholars.

to the composer's bizarre sense of humor and his propensity to invent many fantastic stories about his travels, such as his having calmed carnivorous plants by playing the saxophone. It is also possible that, either Delarue or Villa-Lobos may have been echoing, not without some ironic playfulness, the artistic philosophy of the São Paulo modernists, who sustained that Brazilian artists must repurpose and transform older forms through a type of aesthetic cannibalism, a view that would soon crystalize in Oswald de Andrade's seminal essay, the *Manifesto Antropófago* (Cannibalist Manifesto), published in 1928.¹⁵³

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The article fit well with Villa-Lobos' larger efforts at self-promotion in Paris, so he made no effort to challenge its veracity. Guérios discusses two further articles from that period that also included fantastic stories about the composer's life. He also suggests that specifically the article written by Suzanne Demarquez, someone who became a close friend of Lucília Villa-Lobos, contains biographic details that would require close collaboration with the composer. Guérios believes that this article may have been, in fact, the main source that would inform later biographies.¹⁵⁵

The image of the intrepid adventurer who delved into the mysterious and exotic Brazilian hinterland was further reinforced in the program for the October 1927 concert, in which Rodrigues Barbosa describes Villa-Lobos as a life-long researcher whose research findings would be subsequently published in a collection called *Alma do*

¹⁵³ Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto Antropófago," *Revista de Antropofagia*, year 1, no. 1 (May 1928).

¹⁵⁴ The ironic and darkly humorous tone of the manifest can be exemplified by how Andrade signed and dated the document: "Oswald de Andrade, from Piratininga (municipality in the state of São Paulo), year 374 from the deglutition of the Sardinha Bishop," making reference to the famous episode from 1556 in which Pero Fernandes Sardinha, first Bishop of Brazil, was captured, killed, and eaten by a tribe of *Caetés* in an act of ritual cannibalism.

¹⁵⁵ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 182.

Brasil.¹⁵⁶ As Guérios explains, the newspaper's response to the concerts and publicity "reflected exactly the image that the composer intended to project."¹⁵⁷

Back in Brazil, however, Villa-Lobos' creative liberties were not well received and the newspapers were flooded with many letters from angry readers. This self-aggrandizing propaganda was also not well received by his friend Mário de Andrade, and this episode marks the beginning of the distancing between the two artists. Andrade was prophetic confessing that he feared that in the future "historians will have to completely rewrite Villa-Lobos' biography . . ."¹⁵⁸

Despite the growing polemic about Villa-Lobos's image in Brazil, 1927 and 1928 afforded the composer great success in Paris, but this still did not significantly improve his financial situation. In 1929, tired and embarrassed of constantly asking for more money from his patrons, Villa-Lobos took a quick trip back to Brazil to sell a few Gaveau pianos and to perform a few concerts. Initially, the plan was to perform in several states, but, in the end, there were only a few performances in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and those were met with a cold reception from the public. His new compositions, together with the wild stories published in Paris about his life, led to a harsh and bigoted review by his old nemesis, Guanabara, which was published in the June 26 edition of the *Jornal do Commercio*. Still campaigning against the composer, the critic revealed his racist views when talking about the African influences in *Chôros No. 10*: "it is in this fashion that the propagandist [Villa-Lobos] disheartens us in Paris, trying to make [Parisians]

¹⁵⁶ Brazil's Soul.

¹⁵⁷ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 178.

¹⁵⁸ Mário de Andrade, *Música, Doce Música* (São Paulo: Martins, 1934), 178.

believe that we are a population of ‘negroes’ and that our art does not go beyond the African muddle.”¹⁵⁹

Complicating the poor reception, the sale of pianos also met with limited success and Villa-Lobos returned to Paris to find a polite note from House Gaveau, requesting that he honor his financial obligations with the company. This drove Villa-Lobos once again ask for financial assistance from his patrons, the Guinle Brothers. By the end of May 1930, after organizing a few festivals so that his music would be forgotten during his absence, Villa-Lobos left Paris and returned to Brazil for what he expected to be another short visit.¹⁶⁰ While he would return to Paris years later for short visits, this return to Brazil marks the end of what scholars commonly refer to as his “Paris Years.”

During his “Paris Years,” 1923 – 1929, Villa-Lobos composed over one hundred works and, differently from his first compositions, most of them exhibited a distinct nationalist style. Important nationalist compositions from this Parisian period are *Três Poemas Indígenas* (1926) for voice, as well as *Cirandas* (1926), *Rudepoema* (1926), *Saudades das Selvas Brasileiras* (1927), and *Francette & Piá* (1928) for piano. There are other examples, but perhaps the best-known compositions from his Parisian years are his *Chôros* series (1920-1929). *Chôros* are an important collection of music for many different types of Brazilian music, comprising folk, popular and art music traditions as well as European, Amerindian and Afro-Brazilian musical heritages.

¹⁵⁹ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009), 186.

¹⁶⁰ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author’s Edition, 2009), 186-188.

There are also the misdated nationalist compositions *Amazonas* and *Uirapuru*, as well as two vocal cycles that would set the standard for Brazilian nationalist song, one that would be admired and imitated by generations of composers, *Seréstas* (1925), and the likely misdated *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*. Each shows a different way in which Villa-Lobos approached nationalist music. In *Canções*, as it will be discussed in the next two chapters, he used collected folk material as the basis for the cycle, while in *Seréstas*, he mostly composed entirely new music, emulating different Brazilian popular music genres. *Seréstas* is a little uneven stylistically when compared to the *Canções*, but it is probably Villa-Lobos' most popular and performed set of songs.

6.

Villa-Lobos returned to Brazil while the country was in the middle of a deep economic crisis that had been prompted by the Wall Street Stock Market Crash of 1929, which led to the Great Depression and the 15-year government of Getúlio Vargas. The composer turned to music education, promoting art music and writing patriotic music, eventually being named head of the *Superintendência de Educação Musical e Artística*¹⁶¹, or SEMA, in 1932. It is fair to say that the Vargas regime and Villa-Lobos had a mutually beneficial relationship, with the composer acting as a major propagandist and opinion maker, and with the government allowing him to shape audiences according to his own beliefs.

¹⁶¹ Superintendence of Musical and Artistic Education

The passing of the 1937 constitution saw the advent of the harshest period of the Vargas Years known as *Estado Novo*¹⁶² which was marked by authoritarianism and violent censorship. Villa-Lobos would be much criticized for passively accepting the regime during the *Estado Novo* years, although it seems that he mainly stayed loyal to Vargas for the convenient power and opportunities the regime's propaganda machine afforded him. Villa-Lobos main focus remained on musical education until the deposition of Getúlio Vargas in 1945, having represented Brazil in many music education conferences all over the world, creating the National Conservatory of Orpheonic Singing in 1942, and founding the Brazilian Music Academy in 1945.

A couple of visits from the United States to Brazil in the 1940s started to open a new path for Villa-Lobos' international career, with the composer meeting Leopold Stokowsky, Walt Disney and Nelson Rockefeller. In October of 1944 came the first invitation to visit the United States, a country with which the composer would maintain very close and amicable relations to the end of his life. This first trip to the United States, along with the end of the *Estado Novo* regime in 1945, served as milestone for the end of another period of his biography. During these fifteen years Villa-Lobos continued composing in many different styles, but still with a constant focus on Brazilian music, with his nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* having been his most important compositional project.

The final years of Villa-Lobos life are marked by his international recognition and acclaim, traveling to conduct orchestras and to attend ceremonies in his honor. He also took a turn towards more traditional musical forms such as the symphony and the string

¹⁶² New State.

quartet, and spent most of his time composing for commissions he received from all over the world. In 1947, with the re-opening of Europe after World War II, Villa-Lobos started to revisit the old continent. In the beginning of 1948, Villa-Lobos went back to Paris, with the change in his compositional style over the last two decades being remarked by the press.¹⁶³ Between 1949 and 1952 he performed in the United States, Europe, Japan, Argentina and Israel, conducting some major orchestras such as the *Academia di Santa Cecilia* orchestra, and conducting at the legendary *Teatro Alla Scala*, in Milan. According to Peppercorn, “his string quartets numbered up to seventeen and his symphonies to twelve. But he composed so much more, including works for solo instruments and orchestra commissioned and executed by famous artists of the time.”¹⁶⁴ In November 17, 1959, he died in Rio de Janeiro at age 72 after losing his decade long fight with cancer.¹⁶⁵

Up to recently, much of Villa-Lobos’ legacy has been mired by the various myths and inaccuracies told about his biography, many of them of his own making. It is true that he grew up as both a classical and popular musician, and this gave him an obvious advantage when combining both of these musical worlds. This background may have given him the ability to be the first Brazilian composer to develop a consolidated nationalist style of art music, providing a baseline or point of departure for all future generations of composers.

¹⁶³ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itaiaia, 1989), 122.

¹⁶⁴ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 145.

¹⁶⁵ Vasco Mariz, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: Compositor Brasileiro*, 11th ed. (Belo Horizonte, Itaiaia, 1989), 126-128.

But, contrary to romantic narratives about his legacy, this was neither the result of his supposed “predestination” to create Brazilian art music, nor of his lifelong dedication to the field research of Brazilian folklore. Many of the materials he used to create this new music came from secondary sources, and it only appeared after his exposure to the music and ideas of European composers, especially Stravinsky. As this chapter has proposed, an important motivation for the abrupt shift in style, one that is not often discussed, came from the reactions he received by Parisian audiences, artists and critics.

Accounting for the importance of the Paris years is also key when it comes to the correction of the composition dates of some crucial early nationalist works of Villa-Lobos. One of such works that has received very little attention is the song cycle *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*. The study of these songs provide a particularly interesting view of how Villa-Lobos combined Brazilian musical material and modernist European techniques. To this end, the next chapter will analyze *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*’ place within Villa-Lobos’ body of vocal compositions, study the source of the Brazilian musical materials referenced in these songs, and argue for their composition to have taken place during the Paris years. The final chapter will provide a musical analysis of this set of songs, showing how Villa-Lobos adapted the source material.

Chapter 5: *CANÇÕES TÍPICAS BRASILEIRAS*: DATES AND SOURCES

1.

*Canções Típicas Brasileiras*¹⁶⁶, originally published in 1930 as *Chansons typiques Brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca* (Typical Brazilian Songs: From the Indian songs to the popular songs from the Carnival of Rio de Janeiro), is a collection of ten songs for voice and piano adapted from Brazilian folk and popular music, which Villa-Lobos collected from various sources. While there is fairly clear evidence that three extra songs were added in 1935, there is much uncertainty about the original ten songs from the set. Most sources indicate that they were composed in 1919 but, as it will be explained in this chapter, there is evidence that suggests that they were composed later in the 1920s, after his first visit to Paris.

As the last chapter has shown, other pieces that were allegedly composed in the late 1910s such as *Amazonas* and *Uirapuru* are having their composition dates challenged by recent scholarship, reinforcing the theory that Villa-Lobos' nationalist style developed as a result of his contact with the Parisian vanguard. If *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* was indeed composed years later, Villa-Lobos' evolution of style, particularly in the case of his songs, becomes much more linear, as the songs in this set do not seem to fit stylistically with other vocal works written around its alleged date of composition in

¹⁶⁶ Heitor Villa-Lobos, Mário de Andrade, and Catullo da Paixão Cearense, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les Chants indiens jusqu'aux Chansons populaires du Carnaval Carioca* (Paris: M. Eschig, 1930).

1919. This is in a great part because of the explicitly nationalist character of this song cycle.

Another song collection composed in 1919, *Historietas*, exhibits no nationalist musical elements and relies on early twentieth-century European composition techniques such as arpeggios of expanded 7th and 9th chords, parallel chords, and hexatonic scales. These features give the set an unmistakable French impressionist sound. Even the one work from this earlier period that features a stylistic musical element that can be identified as Brazilian, *Sertão no Estio* (1919), which has an accompaniment that rhythmically resembles a very slow *maxixe*, seems conservative in its nationalist aspirations, retaining instead a primarily French character due to its harmonic language.

The next set, from 1921, features text by Ronald de Carvalho and is called *Epigramas Irônicos e Sentimentais*. This collection of musical miniatures was composed in a different style from *Historietas*, drawing on a more atonal language seen before in the song *Louco* (1917). Again, no Brazilian musical element can be found in this work.

Another important small set of songs is the *Coleção Brasileira* from 1923, even though it is often ignored in discussions about the composer. The two songs that make this set, *Tempos Atrás* and *Tristeza*, exhibit a certain nationalist character, even if limited, with the second one featuring a constant ostinato in the accompaniment, an important characteristic of Villa-Lobos' music that had yet to make any important appearance in his songs (if we assume that *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* was composed after this date).

The last song collection that is of importance for this discussion is *Seréstas*, another work by Villa-Lobos for which the dating of its composition has been a challenge, although recent scholarship suggests that its first twelve songs were composed

in 1925 and 1926.¹⁶⁷ *Seréstas*, meaning “serenades,” is a collection of original compositions emulating different styles of Brazilian folk and popular music, with a predominance of the urban popular genre known as the *modinha*. This song set has many more similarities with *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* than any other of the aforementioned sets, serving as evidence that both song cycles were written about the same time.

The original ten songs in *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* were written first for voice and piano, and later orchestrated by the composer himself, a common practice with most of his song sets. Since this study is primarily focused on dating the composition of this piece and its connections to Villa-Lobos’ compositional output during the Paris Years, the three songs that were subsequently added in 1935 are outside the scope of this research project.

The ten original *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* discussed in this study are:

1. Mokoce cê-maká
2. Nozani-ná
3. Papai curumiassú
4. Xangô
5. Estrela é lua nova
6. Viola Quebrada (written by Mário de Andrade)
7. Adeus ema
8. Pálida madona (written by Castro Alves and Costa Júnior)
9. Tu passaste por esse jardim (written by Catulo Cearense and Alfredo Dutra)
10. Cabôca de Caxangá (written by Catulo Cearense and João Pernambuco)

¹⁶⁷ Noé Sánchez, “The Fourteen Seréstas of Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)” (master’s thesis, University of North Texas, 1999), 31.

There is a remarkable diversity of Brazilian musical genres and traditions represented in this song set, and the songs can be divided into four groups. Songs 1 and 2 are representative of the Indigenous music of Brazil, and are constructed over two melodies from the Paresi tribe documented in the recordings made by Edgar Roquette-Pinto in 1911. Songs 4 and 5 are linked to the *macumba*¹⁶⁸ ceremonies, religious practices associated with Afro-Brazilian populations but also having some Amerindian cultural influences. Songs 3, 7 and 10 are songs representing different folk and popular rural forms of expression from the northern part of the country, using texts in a local Portuguese vernacular. The last group represents urban popular music as embodied in the genre of the *modinha*. Songs 8 and 9 have texts in formal archaic Portuguese, while song 6, written by Mário de Andrade, imitates the Portuguese vernacular associated with rural populations.

This diversity makes this song collection a very representative sampling of the early folk and popular traditions meant to represent the whole of the Brazilian nation, as interpreted by a noted Brazilian art music composer. The title of the collection is an indication that such balance and variety was actively sought by the composer.

2.

The collected musical material for *Canções* is a combination of Villa-Lobos' prior experience and familiarity with popular musicians, research materials collected by scholars and explorers, as well as impressions he got from his trips throughout the

¹⁶⁸ At the beginning of the twentieth-century, *macumba* was a generic term for many different African-Brazilian religious manifestations. Today, the term is considered pejorative and more specific denominations such as *Candomblé*, *Umbanda*, and *Quimbanda* are preferred.

country in his youth, even if these latter ones were much less adventurous than suggested by the composer's early biographies. The history of the collection of the source material begins with the first two songs, which involves two great Brazilians: Edgar Roquette-Pinto and the Marshal Cândido Rondon.

Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon, or Marshal Rondon as he is better known, was a Brazilian military officer and explorer, and one of the early Brazilian heroes. He was involved in the abolitionist movement and in the drafting of the Proclamation of the Brazilian republic in 1889. A mixed-race Brazilian of Indigenous descent from both his paternal and maternal lines, Rondon explored the center-west region of Brazil in the early 1900s, and traveled the whole interior of the northern part of the country, leading expeditions to install telegraph lines and connect remote areas to the country's main urban centers. There are many heroic stories about Rondon, some of which may have served as inspiration for the tall tales that Villa-Lobos would tell about himself. It is important to remember that Villa-Lobos had relatives that had participated in those expeditions. Rondon's fame was far reaching, having lead an expedition between 1913 and 1914 that included the American ex-president Theodore Roosevelt, and even having one of the Brazilian states named after him.¹⁶⁹

The Rondon Commission expeditions, which intended to explore the Amazonian region, were integrated by many different professionals, including another famous Brazilian, Edgar Roquette-Pinto. A true renaissance man, Roquette-Pinto was an anthropologist, biologist, medical doctor, physiologist, educator, writer, director, journalist, pioneer of national radio and cinema, member of the *Academia Brasileira de*

¹⁶⁹ Rondônia, in the North region of Brazil.

Letras, and director of the *Museu Nacional*. He joined the Rondon Commission in 1912 to expand upon the data he had already collected about the Paresi Indigenous group and to explore the elusive and mysterious Nambikwara Indigenous group. The book he published as a result of that trip, *Rondônia*¹⁷⁰, is considered a milestone of Brazilian anthropology.

The Paresi tribes lived in the state of Mato-Grosso, on the shores of the Paraguay River, and were “discovered” in 1723 by the explorer Antônio Pires de Campos, who named the region “The Kingdom of the Paresis.” Calling themselves Ariti, their language is part of the Arawakan language family, a euphonic and onomatopoeic language.¹⁷¹ At that time, sleeping in hammocks and stretchers was actually a big part of Paresi life and identity, to the point that they distinguished themselves from neighboring Nambikwara groups by calling them *uiakokorês*, meaning “those who sleep on the ground.”

Brazilian Indigenous music feature scales that are complex and not pentatonic as it is often assumed, with the half-step interval appearing even in melodies with very few pitches. For example, when the pitches of multiple Paresi flutes are combined, they produce a heptatonic scale. The music can have tonal tendencies and even melodies built on triads, but early twentieth century scholars believed that this was likely the result of the influence of European educators.¹⁷² It is important to remember that the Christianizing efforts of the Jesuits reached the interior of the country more than a century before these research expeditions.

¹⁷⁰ Edgar Roquette-Pinto, *Rondônia. Anthropologia. Ethnografia*. (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivos - Museu Nacional, 1917).

¹⁷¹ José de Lima Figueiredo, *Índios do Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1939), 81-87.

¹⁷² Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, *Escala, ritmo e melodia na música dos índios brasileiros* (Rio de Janeiro: Rodrigues, 1938)

The two Paresi melodies used by Villa-Lobos are very different from each other as he came to them through two different processes. Roquette-Pinto recorded many Paresi songs in wax cylinders, using a portable Edison phonograph. These recordings were made available to the public at the *Museu Nacional*, together with a large collection of objects and musical instruments collected during the expeditions. *Rondônia* included simple transcriptions of seven Paresi songs, the most famous being “Nozani-ná,” a melody that has been used by multiple composers and recorded by popular musicians. Villa-Lobos himself used the melody in several compositions: *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, *Chôros No. 3* (1925), *Introdução aos Chôros* (1929), *Rudepoema* (1926), *Regojizo de uma Raça* (1937), and *Descobrimento do Brasil* (1937).¹⁷³ It is a festive song, originally sung to celebrate the victories of the Paresi over the Munduruku and Nambiqwara. The song talks about dancing, putting on new vestments, eating and drinking. Villa-Lobos used the transcription found in Roquette-Pinto’s book, but chose to transpose the melody in order to avoid accidentals in the key signature (there were four flats in the original transcription).

The second collected melody, “Mokocê- cê-maka,” was not transcribed in *Rondônia* but was transcribed by the composer himself, using a greater degree of detail and complexity than the transcriptions provided in Roquette-Pinto’s book. The original phonograms from the Rondon expedition were released in a CD by the *Museu Nacional* in 2008¹⁷⁴, including the melody for this second song, which is listed as recording

¹⁷³ Gabriel Ferrão Moreira and Acácio Tadeu de Camargo Piedade, “Nozani-ná e o elemento indígena na obra de Heitor Villa-Lobos dos anos 20” (XX Congresso da Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Música – Florianópolis – 2010).

¹⁷⁴ *Rondônia 1912: Gravações Históricas de Roquette-Pinto*, ed. Edmundo Pereira and Gustavo Pacheco, Museu Nacional, 2008.

number 14.601. Comparing the recording to Villa-Lobos' transcription reveals a couple of interesting points. First, Villa-Lobos transcribes the melody as two descending chromatic gestures, while the surviving audio, admittedly of poor quality, suggests a simpler melody.¹⁷⁵

The second interesting aspect of this transcription process, as noted by Leopoldo Waizbort in his fascinating article, is that Villa-Lobos chose to take advantage of a technical mistake in the recording, transforming it into an expressive device.¹⁷⁶ In one of the repetitions of the melody, the cylinder of the phonograph rotated slower for a moment, creating an acceleration in the final recording. Instead of ignoring the technical glitch, Villa-Lobos transcribed the resulting effect, raising the pitch and accelerating the rhythm in the fourth repetition of the first phrase, and again in the third repetition of the second phrase. Because the event happens only once in the recording, it is clear that it was an error in the recording process, which in turn suggests that the resulting transcription was a conscious choice made by the composer.

This transcription, because of its increased complexity when compared to the recording, reveals an intention on the part of Villa-Lobos to bring the Indigenous melody into his own musical system. Having to make the transcription in person at the museum, one can imagine Villa-Lobos being inspired by the recordings while surrounded by the artifacts collected in the original expedition and by the picturesque passages in Roquette-Pinto's book, which included a rich description of the moment in which of "Mokocê cê-maka" was collected:

¹⁷⁵ Leopoldo Waizbort, "Fonógrafo," *Novos Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 1 (July 2014), 37-38.

¹⁷⁶ Leopoldo Waizbort, "Fonógrafo," *Novos Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 1 (July 2014), 40.

We went, late at night, to visit the hut; we entered between the stretchers and stood in a corner. The bonfire light, rising through the stretchers, weaved in red or yellow lines, illuminated the naked bodies, stretched transversally. In a hammock, a whole family sung: father, mother and two kids, all hugging intently. Beyond, a child wept by an Indian woman's who rocked him in her arms, singing:

*Ená-môkôcê cê-maká*¹⁷⁷

Ená-môkôcê cê-maká

And if the child is female, they sing:

Uiró-môkôcê cê-maká...^{178 179}

As discussed in the previous chapter, it is difficult to be precise about when Villa-Lobos came in contact with the recordings material collected by Roquette-Pinto. While the more fantastic narratives associated with Villa-Lobos biography might point towards the composer having collected these songs during his early travels through Brazil, this misconception was put to rest with the score, which credits the previously published sources. *Rondônia* was first published in 1912, so Villa-Lobos could have known this material before his first trip to Paris in 1923. However, there are no examples that use that same source material prior to 1925 other than the alleged 1919 composition date of *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, which recent studies discussed in the previous chapter put into question. It is more likely that he only studied this material after his attention turned toward nationalism, sometime during his Paris period.

¹⁷⁷ Boy sleep in the hammock.

¹⁷⁸ Girl sleep in the hammock.

¹⁷⁹ Edgar Roquette-Pinto, *Rondônia. Anthropologia. Ethnografia*. (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivos - Museu Nacional, 1917), 130.

3.

The second group of songs from *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* are songs based on Afro-Brazilian and related religious music traditions, to which Villa-Lobos referred in the score by the generic term *macumba*. Under the title of the songs “Xangô” and “Estrela é lua nova,” Villa-Lobos gives the vague reference “Canção fetiche de Makumba”¹⁸⁰, the only indication he left as to where he collected the tunes.

The term *macumba* was used to generically name the many different African-Brazilian cults and religions, and is considered pejorative today for its reductionism. The word refers to a percussion instrument.¹⁸¹ Afro-Brazilian religions grew out of a process of syncretism that combined elements of the religions of the many African nations, whose people had been enslaved and brought to Brazil, with Christian imagery and Indigenous and folk beliefs.

The oldest and closest to its African roots of these religions is called *candomblé*, a mixture of beliefs from the Yoruba, Ewe, Fon, and Bantu people, disguised under the worship of catholic saints, the only possible manner in which slaves could continue their worship. The most common language used in these cults is Yorubá¹⁸², although remnants of other languages are also included.¹⁸³

Candomblé is centered on the Yoruba cult of the *orixás*, deified African ancestors that represent forces of nature and the supreme energy of existence, the *axé*. Initially, there were different “nations” associated with *candomblé*, but the Yoruba tradition

¹⁸⁰ Fetish *macumba* song, in an older Portuguese spelling.

¹⁸¹ According to the *Novo Dicionário Aurélio da Língua Portuguesa*.

¹⁸² Yoruba.

¹⁸³ Antonio Gomes da Costa Neto, “A Linguagem no Candomblé: um estudo lingüístico sobre as comunidades religiosas afro-brasileiras,” <http://www.palmares.gov.br/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/A-Linguagem-no-Candombl%C3%A9.pdf> (accessed November 26, 2016), 15.

eventually became predominant. One of the main *orixás* is Xangô, the deity of fire and thunder. According to mythology, Xangô was one of the first kings of the Oyo Empire in present-day Nigeria¹⁸⁴, an *orixá* known for being violent and vindictive.

Each *orixá* is associated with many *pontos*, elements or features that can be visual, textual, choreographic, or musical, such as a rhythm played by different drums, or a type of song called the *ponto cantado*, which is the type of source used by Villa-Lobos. The song “Xangô” is based on a *ponto cantado*, related to the *orixá* of the same name.

Peppercorn suggests that Villa-Lobos learned this melody after hearing it sung by an old black servant that worked at a friend’s house.¹⁸⁵ She quotes no sources for the story, so it is nearly impossible to check its veracity. This, however, is not improbable, given that the large majority of the black urban population attended these *candomblé* rituals.¹⁸⁶ Also, this seems to be a fairly well-known *ponto cantado* for it has appeared in many occasions in the literature. Eero Tarasti, for example, has pointed out the appearance of the melody in Oneyda Alvarenga’s book/catalog “*Música Popular Brasileira*” from 1945.¹⁸⁷ The song is also found in Mário de Andrade’s essay *Ensaio sobre a música Brasileira* (1928)¹⁸⁸ as it was shown in Juliana Ripke da Costa’s article about a recurring use of a Xangô-like figure in the music of Villa-Lobos and some later composers.¹⁸⁹ For his version of the song, Villa-Lobos transforms the original melody by

¹⁸⁴ Carybé, *Mural dos orixás* (Salvador: Banco da Bahia Investimentos. S/A, 1979), 42.

¹⁸⁵ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos*, ed. Audrey Sampson, trans. Talita M. Rodrigues (Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000), 77.

¹⁸⁶ A practice still very common in some states of Brazil.

¹⁸⁷ Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos – life and Works, 1887-1959* (Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: Mc Farland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1995) 225.

¹⁸⁸ Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editôra, 1928).

¹⁸⁹ Juliana Ripke da Costa, “Canto de xangô: uma tópica afro-brasileira,” *Orfeu - Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Música - CEART – UDESC*, no. 1 (June 2016): 59.

an augmentation of its rhythmic values, as it will be shown in the next chapter. The text is very simple and onomatopoeic, as is the case with many of these earlier *ponto cantados*:

Table 5-1 Lyrics from “Ebomi la urê,” part of the ritual of candomblé Ketu, the largest of the candomblé nations.

Ebomi La Urê

Aê-Aê-Aê

Ebomi La Urê

The fact that Mário de Andrade, a close friend of Villa-Lobos, published a version of this song in 1928, provides circumstantial evidence in support of *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* having been composed around this time. It is possible that the story mentioned above about Villa-Lobos learning it from an old black servant is only another fabrication and part of the Villa-Lobos myth. If Villa-Lobos indeed learned this song from Andrade, this is another indication that the composer did not turn his full attention to this kind of musical material until after his first trip to Paris.

For the other song based on Afro-Brazilian religious tradition, Villa-Lobos again leaves us with virtually no information about its origin, but much can be said about its character and theme. The text is in Portuguese¹⁹⁰, which suggests it is related to what would be later identified as *umbanda*, a newer religion that appeared in the late nineteenth-century as a syncretic junction of African religions, Catholicism, Spiritism and Indigenous Latin American beliefs. This is confirmed by the appearance of a very similar version of the song in lists of *pontos cantados* distributed by different current centers of

¹⁹⁰ Texts for all songs will be provided in the next chapter.

umbanda, such as the one made available by *Tenda Espírita Nossa Senhora da Piedade*.¹⁹¹

Umbanda has an enormous pantheon of deities, and this song seems to be associated with the *Caboclo Lua Nova*. *Caboclos* are believed to be spirits of deceased Indigenous and mixed-race Brazilians, considered good entities that help people by helping them identify medicinal plants and offering counsel. In the catholic-like hierarchy of umbanda, the *Caboclo Lua Nova* is a phalanx of the *Caboclo Sete Flechas*, a manifestation of the *orixá Oxóssi*.¹⁹²

Ednardo Monteiro Gonzaga do Monti clarifies that the mention of gold in the lyrics is probably a reference to the use of religious objects made of gold by some secret societies that practiced these rituals.¹⁹³ There are also words of African origin that are again used in an onomatopoeic fashion in this song, this technique being expanded upon in later compositions by Villa-Lobos that use the same source.

In both songs, as the next chapter will show, the vanguardist twentieth-century musical elements are particularly obvious: rhythmic ostinatos with unusual accentuations, and tone clusters. The musical treatment Villa-Lobos gives to these two melodies differs greatly from his compositions from before his first trip to Paris, and provides further evidence that this song cycle was composed years later.

¹⁹¹ Tenda Espírita Nossa Senhora da Piedade, “500 Pontos de Umbanda,” <http://www.institutocaminhosoriental.com/Livros/Pontos%20de%20Umbanda%20Tenda%20Nossa%20Senhora%20da%20Piedade.pdf> (accessed April 4, 2017), 49.

¹⁹² Olga Gudolle Cacciatore, *Dicionário de cultos afro-brasileiros: com origem das palavras*, 2nd ed. (Rio de Janeiro, Forense Universitária, 1977), 122.

¹⁹³ Ednardo Monteiro Gonzaga do Monti, “Canto Orfeônico: Villa-Lobos e as Representações Sociais da Era Vargas” (master’s thesis, Universidade Católica de Petrópolis, 2009), 101.

4.

The songs in Portuguese vernacular, with the exception of “Viola Quebrada,” which is included in the last grouping, are drawn from traditions that originated in the North and Northeast of Brazil. The song “Papai Curumiassú” is a simple lullaby that is described in the score as “Canção de rêde entre os Caboclos do Pará.”¹⁹⁴ The song mentions two characters with Indigenous names: “Father Curumiassú” and “Mother Curumiary.”

Villa-Lobos’ reinterpretation features a small difference in the final part of the text when compared to the popular version that is performed today. In Villa-Lobos’ version, the final verse is “meu galo canta dahi” (my rooster sings from there), while in the current version the text is “meu galo canta da ilha” (my rooster sings from the island), the latter creating a more coherent pair with the previous verse “meu galo canta da serra” (my rooster sings from the hill). The song’s musical atmosphere emulates the rocking motion of a small child being put to sleep in a hammock (Example 5-1). As mentioned in chapter 2, the image of rocking in a hammock is associated with feelings of nostalgia linked to the Brazilian national imaginary and has been used by a number of composers, including Villa-Lobos who used this image on a previous work, namely “Idílio na rede” from the *Suite Floral* (1917-1918).

¹⁹⁴ Hammock song amongst the *caboclos* (Brazilians of mixed Indigenous and white ancestry) of Pará (a state in the north region of Brazil).



Example 5-1 “Papae Curumiassú” – mm. 1–4.¹⁹⁵

The song “Adeus ema” is an example of a *repente*, the Brazilian version of the Iberian troubadour song. Usually associated with the Northeast region of Brazil, *repente* or *cantoria* is a form of improvised song in which two singers alternate verses, usually insulting or challenging each other in a competitive style known as *desafio*.¹⁹⁶ These songs usually feature a short refrain that alternates with the improvised verses and are usually accompanied by the Brazilian *viola caipira*, a ten-string, five-course guitar. There are other forms of the *desafio* in other regions of Brazil, and in the south accordion and guitar more commonly provide the accompaniment. As indicated on the score, the particular tune used by Villa-Lobos comes from the northern part of the state of Minas Gerais in southeastern part of the country.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca* / 3, *Papae curumiassú: canção de rede os Caboclos do Pará*. voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

¹⁹⁶ “Challenge.” This is the word that appears in the score to describe the nature of the source material.

¹⁹⁷ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca* / 7, *Adeus Ema: desafio: thème populaire du Nord de “Minas Geraes,”* voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

The melody of these *desafios* are simple, with its rhythm adapted to fit the words being improvised.¹⁹⁸ There are many meters and rhyme schemes that these improvised texts must follow. In the case of “Adeus ema,” the specific pattern that is used is called *verso de sete pés*, verses with seven poetic syllables per line. The text is simple, with no musical refrain and five “improvised” verses, each starting with the words “Adeus ema, adeus ema” that speak how different things receive different names in different places. *Ema* is the Portuguese word for the greater rhea (*rhea americana*), the largest native bird of the Americas. References to the *ema* can be found in some folk traditions from the Northeast of the country, but its inclusion in the context of this song is not clear.

The third and last song of this group, “Cabôca de Caxangá,” is from a related tradition from the Northeast called *embolada*, many times mistaken with *repente*. The *embolada* is another form of competitive poetry/song, but with different characteristics. The *embolada* is accompanied by the *pandeiro*¹⁹⁹ with no harmonic support, and with the competing pairs usually fixed, which makes it different from *repente* where it is common for a single *cantador* to challenge different singers. Also, in the *embolada*, there is more freedom in terms of meter and the flow of the text tends to be much faster. The rhyme schemes are also looser, allowing for the pairing words that sound alike without having necessarily the same phonetic ending.²⁰⁰

The specific melody for this song is not a traditionally improvised *embolada* from the northeastern folklore, but a hit song emulating that style written for the Rio de Janeiro

¹⁹⁸ Oneyda Alvarenga, *Música popular brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro/Porto Alegre/São Paulo: Globo, 1950), 259.

¹⁹⁹ Brazil’s most popular percussion instrument, similar to a tambourine, but with a tunable drumhead. It is played in a combination of striking the drumhead and shaking the instrument, sounding the metal jingles.

²⁰⁰ Jimmy Vasconcelos de Azevêdo, “O Pandeiro e o Folheto: A Embolada Enquanto Manifestação Oral e Escrita,” in *Cocos: Alegria e Devoção*, 2nd ed., ed. Maria Ignez Novais Ayala and Marcos Ayala (Crato: Edson Soares Martins Ed., 2015), 142-144.

Carnival in 1914. The music and text were both credited to Catulo da Paixão Cearense, although the music was most likely composed by the guitar player João Pernambuco (1883 – 1947)²⁰¹, both artists from the Northeast. Even if not directly extracted from the original *embolada* tradition, “Cabôca de Caxangá” presents most musical elements of the style.

Catulo da Paixão Cearense (1863 – 1946) was an important poet and popular figure in Rio de Janeiro at the start of the twentieth-century. Catulo’s life can be divided in two phases: the first, when he was essentially a lyricist for popular songs and a second phase after 1918, when he became well-known as a folk poet, moving gradually to a more traditional style as he entered his old age.²⁰² Villa-Lobos was an open admirer and enthusiast of his popular poetry, even if he was critical of his musical skills. Fittingly, both of the songs penned by Catulo that are used in *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* have music written by somebody else.

It is possible that Villa-Lobos had knowledge of these songs well before 1919. This is most likely the case for “Cabôca de Caxangá,” which was already a well-known tune in Rio de Janeiro by 1914. The other two songs may have been collected by the composer himself as they do not appear in other publications from the period.

5.

The final group of songs from *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* represents the most important genre of early Brazilian urban popular song: the *modinha*. The word *moda*,

²⁰¹ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 183.

²⁰² Jairo Severiano, *Uma História da Música Popular Brasileira: das Origens a Modernidade* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2008), 65-68.

which provides the root of the term, was used in Portugal to describe any kind of song that was in vogue. As Mozart de Araújo explains in his book²⁰³, the term *modinha*, the diminutive of *moda*, was used to designate a new kind of song that was first documented in Portugal but that was an innovation that originally came from the Brazilian colonies.

This origin story is associated with Domingos Caldas Barbosa (1739? – 1800), considered by many the first important name in the history of Brazilian popular music. The son of a Portuguese man and a freed Angolan slave, he was born in Rio de Janeiro.²⁰⁴ He demonstrated poetic inclinations with a tendency towards satire from an early age, having being sent to the far colony of Sacramento as a soldier after irritating some important local figures. Shortly after his return in 1762, he was able to move to Portugal with the help of some influential friends in the Portuguese court.

Barbosa became famous in the 1770s for singing *modinhas* and *lundús*²⁰⁵ for Maria I of Portugal, accompanying himself with a *viola de arame*, a nine-string, five-course guitar-like instrument that is the Portuguese predecessor of the Brazilian *viola caipira*. The text to his songs were published in a collection called *Viola de Lereno: Coleção de Improvizos e Cantigas de Domingos Caldas Barbosa*.²⁰⁶ While none of his music survived in manuscript form, it is possible that some of his compositions may have become part of the local folk music repertoire. Béhague believes that many of the *modinhas* in the collections entitled *Modinhas* and *Modinhas do Brasil* compiled by the

²⁰³ Mozart de Araújo, *A Modinha e o Lundú no Século XVIII* (São Paulo: Ricordi Brasileira, 1963), 28.

²⁰⁴ Or perhaps in a ship on its way to Brazil from Angola, a different version of his biography defended by a nephew of Barbosa.

²⁰⁵ Another important genre of early Brazilian song, marked by open irreverence and malice in its verses. It was originally a dance rooted in the *batuque* tradition, whose rhythm might be a precursor of the *maxixe*.

²⁰⁶ In old Portuguese, “Collection of Songs and Improvisations by Domingos Caldas Barbosa.”

Biblioteca da Ajuda in Lisbon may have been written by Barbosa, but further proof is still needed at this point.²⁰⁷

Tinhorão believes that the new style created by Barbosa, with its explicit treatment of romantic and sensual topics, reflected the closer contact that members of the opposite sex began to experience in the new urban context of the late eighteenth-century. He also affirms that it makes sense that this new genre would come to Portugal from Brazil, as Brazilian society was more prone to such innovations for having a more relaxed control of its morals by the church, and for being “more dynamic in its exchange between the classes.”²⁰⁸

The new style was well-received by the Portuguese and soon many art music composers started producing works in the *modinha* style, which caused the loss of many of its early Brazilian characteristics, developing instead a Portuguese variant closer to the Italian *belcanto*, the musical style of choice of the Portuguese court. This new and more Europeanized version that resembled chamber art song returned to Brazil along with the Portuguese court in 1808. This does not mean that the original style of *modinha* brought to Portugal by Barbosa wasn’t played in Brazil anymore, it continued to coexist with its Portuguese cousin, mainly within the popular oral tradition.²⁰⁹

Because everything that was European was considered fashionable, it did not take long for the Brazilian population to assimilate the “*belcanto modinha*” cultivated by the Portuguese court and make it their own again. The *modinha*, now accompanied by

²⁰⁷ Gerard Béhague, *Biblioteca da Ajuda (Lisbon) MSS 1595/1596: Two Eighteenth Century Anonymous Collections of Modinhas*, IN Anuario, Tulane University, vol IV, 54.

²⁰⁸ José Ramos Tinhorão, *História da Música Popular Brasileira* (São Paulo: Editora 34, 1998.), 121-124.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 126-127.

harpsichord and piano, started to be sung together with a guitar, and a slow and gradual process of attenuation of the *belcanto* characteristics began.

The first Brazilian *modinha* composer to achieve some success in this new format was Joaquim Manoel da Câmara, a skilled guitar player whose songs impressed the Austrian composer Sigismund Neukomm who arranged over twenty of Camara's *modinhas*. It is possible to identify a conflict between the European and Brazilian tendencies in these early *modinhas*, perhaps best described by Mário de Andrade when he writes: ". . . we can perceive how much our *modinha de salão* (parlor *modinha*) adjusted itself to the European style of melody and nationalized itself in it and despite of it."²¹⁰

Perhaps the most successful composer associated with the genre was Chiquinha Gonzaga (1870 – 1935), a very important figure due to the popularity and controversy associated with her music. Since the *modinha* had been re-embraced by the lower classes and began to reflect their tastes, it started to offend the morals and the "proper" taste of the aristocracy, but never as gravely as the *lundú*, the genre's more flamboyant cousin which was also an important part of Gonzaga's musical output. It was not only her alleged affinity for what was deemed as overtly sexual Afro-Brazilian influences in her music that made the pianist a scandalous figure, but also her constant ability to challenge the social conventions of the time by being a young, beautiful, and talented woman, who lived a bohemian life and had many romantic affairs. The reaction to the subversive aspects of Gonzaga's songs escalated to a point where it landed her a few hours in jail, being released after massive demonstrations of support by the population.²¹¹

²¹⁰ Mário de Andrade, *Modinhas Imperiais* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1964), 7.

²¹¹ Jairo Severiano, *Uma História da Música Popular Brasileira: Das Origens a Modernidade* (São Paulo: Editora 34), 42-46.

With the advent of the radio in the 1920s, operatic voices gained popularity singing popular repertory. The *modinha* was a perfect vehicle for such artists. During the first three decades of the radio, such songs remained high in popularity.²¹²

Bruno Kiefer wrote an excellent study listing the most consistent characteristics of the style during its long evolution. The *modinha* usually follows a form that is either simple AABB, or AABB followed by chorus or refrain. This form parallels the form of the text which is usually organized in four verses. There is an avoidance of the modulation to the dominant, particularly in songs in the minor mode. Melodies are marked by descending phrases, although many start with an upward leap or ascending arpeggio. Melodic phrases also have a tendency to end with accented appoggiaturas leading to rhythmically weak cadences. The time signature of preference is 4/4 time and the short melodic fragments are separated by rests. According to Kiefer, all these characteristics give the *modinha* the general feeling of simplicity, intimacy, sweetness and longing, what he calls “a sequence of amorous sighs.”²¹³

Three of the songs in *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* are arrangements of *modinhas* and they are a good representation of the different styles encompassed by genre. The first one, “Viola Quebrada,” was written by Mário de Andrade and dedicated to a couple with whom he was close friends, Oswald de Andrade and Tarsila do Amaral.²¹⁴ The song is a good example of the more popular style of *modinha*. Written with an imitation of Portuguese vernacular, it is a broken-hearted song about lost love. Following the common

²¹² Waldenyr Caldas, *Iniciação a Música Popular Brasileira* (Barueri, SP: Editora Manole, 2010), 32.

²¹³ Bruno Kiefer, *A Modinha e o Lundú: duas raízes da música popular brasileira* (Porto Alegre: Editora Movimento, 1977), 23-24.

²¹⁴ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Martins Fonte, 2009), 110.

practice of famous authors of using a pseudonym or only initials when writing popular music, the original source of this composition is simply signed “M. de A..”

This song’s inclusion in the set is very strong evidence that the 1919 composition date is incorrect, at least for this particular song. The proof is in the dedication of the original song by Andrade. In 1919, Tarsila do Amaral was still in Europe and would only meet Oswald de Andrade in 1922, and they only would become a couple one year later. Therefore, it is very likely that “Viola Quebrada” was written on or after 1922.

The second *modinha* in *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* is based on an older composition and there is no authorship information listed in the score or anywhere in the scholarship about the piece that identifies the original source. It is listed only as an “old *modinha*.” The lyrics are the first two strophes of the poem “Pensamento de Amor”²¹⁵ by the acclaimed nineteenth-century poet Castro Alves. The melody is by the pianist and composer João José da Costa Júnior (1870 – 1917), penned under the name Juca Storoni, an anagram of Costa Junior. The piece is described as “*modinha popular: schottische*” in a score for piano edited by E. Bevilacqua & C.²¹⁶

The third *modinha* is a piece by Alfredo Dutra (1860 – 1920) to which Catulo da Paixão Cearense wrote lyrics in 1905, and it is still performed by many *chorinho* groups. The long text is written in a refined and old-fashioned form of Portuguese, which references an older style of *modinha*. The melody has an instrumental character, evocative of the predominantly instrumental tradition associated with the *chorinho*. Like “Cabôcla de Caxangá,” this was also a famous song and it was probably known to Villa-Lobos years before he used it as a source for *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*.

²¹⁵ Thought of Love.

²¹⁶ Juca Storoni, *Pallida Madona: Modinha Popular: Schottisch* (São Paulo: E. Bevilacqua & C.)

6.

As the above discussion and that of the previous chapters suggest, it appears that the composition date given by Villa-Lobos for *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* is not supported by tangible evidence.²¹⁷ This collection of songs is probably part of the group of misdated pieces composed during or, more likely, after the composer's first visit to Paris in 1923. Besides the circumstantial evidence associated with most of the source material, and the more concrete evidence found in the case of "Viola Quebrada," there are other factors that support the later composition of these songs.

Villa-Lobos decision to originally give the collection a French-language title was a typical, though not exclusive practice during his Paris years, providing scholars as early as Peppercorn in 1991 with further circumstantial evidence that these songs were most likely composed later in the 1920s.²¹⁸ The *tempi* markings in the score are also written in different languages in different songs, evidence that these were not composed all at once in 1919 as stated by the composer. Furthermore, the dedication of the cycle to the singer Elsie Houston is also another clue that supports the later composition date. While the Brazilian soprano indeed knew Villa-Lobos and Lucília in her teens (she was seventeen in 1919), it was only later on, in Paris, that she famously collaborated with Villa-Lobos, participating in his 1927 concerts and recording many of his songs. But in all fairness, Villa-Lobos may have changed or added this dedication after the composition, a practice

²¹⁷ An analysis of manuscripts is not possible because the original versions are lost, and the only manuscripts left are later transcriptions for orchestra of four of the songs.

²¹⁸ Lisa Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos, The Music: An Analysis of his style* (London: Kahn & Averil, 1991), 30.

not entirely unknown to the composer as was the case with the march used to celebrate Vargas victory in 1930.²¹⁹

Some of the points used to question the composition dates of other Villa-Lobos works from the same period are also applicable to *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the song set does not appear in his catalog of compositions between 1920 and 1923. Furthermore, the song set is listed as having been composed between 1925 and 1929 in an article by Suzanne Demarquez, in the November 1929 issue of *Revue Musicale*.²²⁰ Guérios believes that, because of the level of detail in the article, Villa-Lobos must have been consulted and most likely provided much of the information presented.²²¹

Another piece of evidence in support of the later composition dates are the publishing and first performance dates. The publication dates, 1929-1930, are perhaps not as reliable as the first performance dates because many of Villa-Lobos' early works were indeed published around 1929. In regards to first performances, however, it was not his habit to wait so many years before arranging the premiere of his works, and most certainly not in the case of other his vocal works from the period. *Historietas* (1919) was premiered in 1921, *Epigramas Irônicos e Sentimentais* (1921) premiered in 1922; *Coleção Brasileira* (1923) in 1925; and *Seréstas* (finished c. 1927) in 1929. The first songs from *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* to receive a public performance, "Nozani-ná," "Estrela é Lua Nova" and "Xangô," were premiered in 1929. Had they been composed in

²¹⁹ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fonte, 2009), 191.

²²⁰ Suzanne Demarquez, "Villa-Lobos," *La Revue Musicale*, Paris, n. 10, year 10, November 1929.

²²¹ Paulo R. Guérios, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: O Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação*, 2nd ed. (Curitiba: Author's Edition, 2009), 278-279.

1919 as the composer claimed, it would have taken a very unusual 10 years for the songs to be premiered.

A substantial amount of evidence therefore suggests that the dates offered by Demarquez, 1925-1929, are more reliable, especially since during this compositional period some of the same source material is also used in other compositions. He uses the “Nozani-ná” theme in his *Chôros No. 3* (1925), “Estrela é Lua Nova” appears in the *Chôros No. 12* (1929)²²² and, as Béhague has shown, “Mokocê ce-maka” appears transformed in *Chôros No. 10* (1926).²²³

When one considers specifically his songs, locating the composition date of *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* in the mid to late 1920s makes even more sense. As shown in the beginning of the chapter, *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* is significantly different from other songs composed in the late 1910s and early 1920s, while, at the same time, its similarities with *Seréstas* (c. 1927) are too many to ignore. Besides the obvious focus on Brazilian musical features drawn from different folk and popular music genres, there is also a clear similarity in the style of the piano accompaniment, one that is markedly different than the piano accompaniment of Villa-Lobos earlier works, which have a more explicitly late-romantic or French impressionist style. The use of seconds and small tone clusters in the right hand of the piano accompaniment, coupled with Brazilian rhythms, appears many times in both sets (Examples 5-2 and 5-3).

²²² Ermelinda A. Paz, *Villa-Lobos e a Música Popular Brasileira: Uma Visão sem Preconceito* (Rio de Janeiro: E. A. Paz, 2004), 23.

²²³ Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 91.



Example 5-2 “Estrela é Lua Nova” (*Canções Típicas Brasileiras*), mm. 4-6.²²⁴



Example 5-3 “Na Paz do Outono” (*Seréostas*), mm. 12-14.²²⁵

In both collections, the piano voicings are also inspired by the type of guitar accompaniments used in Brazilian urban popular music (Examples 5-4 and 5-5).

²²⁴ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca/ 5, Estrella e lua nova: canto fetiche de Makumba*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

²²⁵ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Seréostas*, Book 1, voice and piano score (Boca Raton, Fla.: Masters Music Publications, 1990), 23.



Example 5-4 “Pálida Madona” (*Canções Típicas Brasileiras*), mm. 9-11.²²⁶



Example 5-5 “Saudades da Minha Vida” (*Seréstas*), mm. 18-19.²²⁷

And perhaps the most striking of resemblances: the remarkably similar left-hand ostinato used to accompany two very different songs (Examples 5-6 and 5-7).

²²⁶ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca* /8, *Ó Pallida Madona: modinha antiga: poésie populaire*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 2.

²²⁷ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Seréstas*, Book 1, voice and piano score (Boca Raton, Fla.: Masters Music Publications, 1990), 17.

this small excerpt from the second half of the piece, a collected Paresi motif is repeated in a hypnotic ostinato by the choir, accompanied by pizzicato strings, percussive effects and rhythmic motifs with unusual accentuation.

Ob.

Clar.

Sax.

Fag.

I
II
Coro.

Tromb.

2^a Gd. C.

Trin

Gd. C.

Piano

Sop.

Cant.

I

II

Ten.

Bar.

Baix.

I

Vno

II

Viola

Vcello

C. B.

- tú, Jé-ki-ri tú-mú-rú-tú, tú-mú-rú-tú, tú-mú-rú-tú, Jé-ki-ri tú-mú-rú-tú, Jé-ki-ri tú-mú-rú-

- jó, Ta-ya-pó ka-ma-ra-jó, ka-ma-ra-jó, ka-ma-ra-jó, Ta-ya-pó ka-ma-ra-jó, Ta-ya-pó ka-ma-ra-

Ta-ya-pó ka-ma-ra-jó, Ta-ya-pó ka-ma-ra-

- já, Ja-ka-tá ka-ma-ra-já, Ka-ma-ra-já, ka-ma-ra-já, Ja-ka-tá ka-ma-ra-já, Ja-ka-tá ka-ma-ra-

- der — — — — — pe — — — — — las — — — — — es — — — — — pi — — — — —

- der — — — — — pe — — — — — las — — — — — es — — — — — pi — — — — —

pizz

pizz

pizz

pizz

The key to understanding the possible reasons behind the misdating of *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* might be Villa-Lobos' attitude when he first arrived in Europe in the early 1920s, making sure everybody understood that he “was not there to learn.” In retrospect, it seems obvious that he learned a great deal and that his visit provoked an important change in his compositional style. To avoid admitting that he was wrong about his much publicized statement upon the first arrival, he likely backdated a few of his compositions in the new style in order to save face and to imply that he had already developed his distinct nationalist style while still in Brazil, and without the influence of French modernism.

A complicating factor, as mentioned in the last chapter, is that Villa-Lobos was known for sometimes dating his compositions based on the “spiritual conception” of the work. This tendency could also explain the 1919 date of composition imparted to *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, when he would have thought about composing this whole work.²³¹ It is possible that he had some of the songs planned in advance of his first trip to Paris, with maybe even a little music written, but most evidence indicates that the majority of the song collection was written sometime in between 1925 and 1929, making this set a good representation of the Paris years, more commonly associated with his *Chôros* series.

Canções Típicas Brasileiras is indeed a work representative of Villa-Lobos nationalist style; it features musical elements drawn from Amerindian, African and European musical heritages and depicted in a strikingly balanced fashion. It constitutes a

²³¹ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trans. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fonte, 2009), 110.

marked departure from the European post-romantic and French impressionist that informed his earlier works. In these songs, one can find unifying rhythmic motifs, tone clusters, ambiguous harmonic language, and ostinatos with unusual rhythmic accentuations. The next chapter will present a musical analysis of the songs and will identify some of these features in more detail.

Chapter 6: *CANÇÕES TÍPICAS BRASILEIRAS*: WORDS AND MUSIC

This chapter presents individual analyses of the songs in the first published version of *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*.²³² The measure numbering convention used will follow the order provided in the score, counting all measures in first and second endings. The version being used is the Max Eschig edition from 1948²³³, and specific pitches will be indicated using scientific pitch notation.

1. “Môkôcê cê-maká”

This song is a transcription and arrangement by Villa-Lobos of a simple lullaby from the Paresi Indigenous group from the state of Mato Grosso. The song was collected by Edgar Roquette-Pinto during the Rondon expedition of 1912, listed as Recording No. 14.601.

Ená môkôcê cê-máká,
Uirômôkôcê cê-máká.

Boy sleep in the hammock,
Girl sleep in the hammock,

The first line is sung four times, followed by three repetitions of the second line. The song ends with the gradual dissolution of a repeated first line.

²³² The ten original songs allegedly written in 1919. The three songs added in 1935 are not being discussed in this paper.

²³³ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*, 10 songs, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948).

Ená môkôcê cê-máká,
 cê-máká
 máká
 á

Table 6-1 “Môkôcê cê-maká”

Môkôcê cê-maká			
Form - A B			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	Additional Comments
1 – 2	Introduction	2	
3 – 7	A	5	
7 – 10	B	4	“Dominant”
10 - 13	Coda	4	Dissolution

Key – D Minor - No key signature

Time signature and tempo markings: 5/4 Um pouco animado (Un peu animé) (♩= 100)

Vocal range: B3 – G5

The melody consists of descending chromatic phrases following a decrescendo. The first phrase starts on A4 and is repeated three times (Example 6-1). The next phrase starts on G5, with faster melodic figures. This odd fourth phrase is the result of the technical mishap in the recording that was explained in the last chapter. For the B section, the melody is chromatically transposed a fourth lower, creating the effect of a modulation to the dominant. The transposed phrase is repeated twice, followed again by the odd phrase produced by the recording mishap. The opening phrase is then repeated and both text and music come to an end by a gradual dissolution.



Example 6-1 “Môkôcê cê-maká,” m. 3.²³⁴

The song is built on a D Dorian scale, with its characteristic major sixth scale degree and related interval, D - B, featured in the ostinato that constitutes the piano accompaniment (Example 6-2).



Example 6-2 “Môkôcê cê-maká,” m. 1.²³⁵

This ostinato is repeated with only minor changes in the right hand, and it is very chromatic, just like the melody. The main phrase of the melody unfolds over five beats, but is followed by a quarter rest which causes a displacement in relation to the

²³⁴ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca/ 1, Môkôcê cê-maká: dorme na rede: canção para acalantar as criancinhas entre os índios Paricis; recolhido por E. Roquette Pinto*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

²³⁵ Ibid.

accompaniment, which follows the 5/4 time signature. The coda also features the dissolution of the ostinato.

This is one of the songs in which the twentieth-century vanguardist techniques of composition are the most obvious, such as the use of rhythmic ostinato with unusual accentuation as the unifying feature of the piece, rhythmic displacement between melody and accompaniment, ambiguous harmony, and the choice of an asymmetrical 5/4 time signature.

The orchestrated version is for voice, flute, oboe, English horn or alto saxophone, clarinet in A, bassoon, viola and violoncello.

2. “Nozani-ná”

“Nozani-ná” is another song based on source material collected by Edgar Roquette-Pinto. This time though, Villa-Lobos used the transcription printed in *Rondônia* (Example 6-3), transposed to G major. This is a celebratory song from the *Paresi* tribe in which the singer describes everything he will do during the festivity.

PHONOGRAMMA 14.597

(INDIOS PARECÍS)

No - za - ni ná ô - re - ku - á ku - á...

... ka - za ê - tê ê - tê..... No - za - ni

na - ô - re - ku - á ku - á..... No - za -

ni no - te - ra - han ra - han O lo - ni -

ti ni - ti..... No - te - ra - han Ko - ze - to -

zá to - zá No - te - rá te - rá.....

Ke - na - ki - á ki - á..... Ne - ê e -

ná é - ná U - á - la - lô la - lô....

... gi - ra - ha - lô ha - lô.....

Excursão Roquette-Pinto, 1912.

Example 6-3 “Nozani-ná,” Transcription from *Rondonia*.²³⁶

²³⁶ Edgar Roquette-Pinto, *Rondônia. Anthropologia. Ethnografia*. (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivos - Museu Nacional, 1917), 329.

Nozani ná orê kuá, kuá,	I will dance,
Kaza êtê, êtê,	I will dress in new clothes,
Nozani ná orê kuá, kuá,	
Nozani noterahan, rahan,	I will drink wine
Oloniti, niti,	and <i>chicha</i> ²³⁸ ,
Noterahan, kozêtozá, tozá,	
Nôtêrá, têrá	And I will eat
Kenakiá, kiá	
Nêê êná, êná	Corn and
Uálálô, lálô	Cassava porridge.
Giráhalô, halô,	
Uai! ²³⁷	

Table 6-2 “Nozani-ná”

Nozani-ná			
Form - : A B C :			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 – 3	Introduction	3	
4 – 11	A	8	
12 – 21	B	10	
22 - 30	C	9	
Repeat 4 - 28			(29 – 30 1 st Ending)
31 - 33	2 nd Ending	3	

Key – G Myxolidian - No key signature

Time signature and tempo markings: 2 (2/2) Muito animado (Trés animé) (h= 112)

²³⁷ This word and the repetition of the final syllables of each verse are of pure onomatopoeic effect and have no separate meaning.

²³⁸ Indigenous drink made by the fermentation of corn and other cereals with saliva.

Vocal range: E4 – C5

The melody suggests the G Myxolidian mode, with all phrases ending in G and featuring the characteristic pitch (F \sharp). Each short phrase of the melody ends with a repetition of the final syllables of the verse in the pitch of G. The melody is hexatonic, using the notes G – A – B – C – E – F. The absence of D, the dominant of G, reinforces the modal character of the melody. Section A features a “theme” characterized by an upward leap of a fourth, repeated at the end of the section. Section B centers on the pitch of G and its upper and lower neighbor tones, and section C has similar characteristics, but with much less melodic movement. The song ends with a “scream”²³⁹ with no definite pitches (Example 6-4). This may have been inspired by the many recordings of Indigenous Brazilian people imitating the calls of large birds, such as the Paresi recording of the imitation of the cry of the tribe’s sacred hawk, the *uitiariti*.²⁴⁰



Example 6-4 “Nozani-ná,” mm. 32-33.²⁴¹

²³⁹ *Comme un cri.*

²⁴⁰ *Rondônia 1912: Gravações Históricas de Roquette-Pinto*, Faixa 6, ed. Edmundo Pereira and Gustavo Pacheco, Museu Nacional, 2008.

²⁴¹ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 2, *Nozani-ná : canto dos indios Paricis da Serra do Norte (Matto Grosso)* ; recolhido por E. Roquette Pinto, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 2.

The accompaniment written by Villa-Lobos creates an atmosphere of tonal ambiguity. The entire piano part is constructed over CMaj7/9 and FMaj7/9 chords, creating a polytonal texture beneath the G mixolydian melody. This accompaniment is again realized as an ostinato that alternates between these two chords (Example 6-5), with a variation adding bass movement that appears once in each section and at the end of C section (Example 6-6).



Example 6-5 “Nozani-ná,” ostinato, mm. 25-27.²⁴²



Example 6-6 “Nozani-ná,” ostinato variation, mm. 5-7.²⁴³

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 2, *Nozani-ná : canto dos indios Paricis da Serra do Norte (Matto Grosso)* ; recolhido por E. Roquette Pinto, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

The introduction and the final measure are the only places where the tonality of G is clearly implied by the piano. The introduction starts with the main theme in the left hand of the piano, followed immediately by the ostinato that begins with the CMaj7/9 chord in second inversion. The song ends with the accompaniment finally converging with the melody in a unison G. Even though the ninth chords, moving almost in perfect parallel motion, points towards his earlier predilection for French impressionism, the emphasis on polytonality is more consistent with the style he developed during and after visiting Paris.

This song was orchestrated by Villa-Lobos for voice, clarinet in Bb, two French horns and string quintet.

3. “Papai Curumiassú”

This is a lullaby from the Northern state of Pará that comes with the indication “Hammock song,” alluding to the Brazilian image of lazily swinging in a hammock. The song is a musical depiction of this image, with a certain sense of monotony created by an incessant pedal note, very sparse accompaniment, and a simple melody.

Papai Curumiassú
Mamãe Curumiary
O galo canta da serra,
Meu galo canta daí.

Schô! Galo ingrato...

Father Curumiassú
Mother Curumiary
The rooster sings from the hill,
My rooster sings from there.

Shoo! Ungrateful rooster...

Table 6-3 “Papai Curumiassú”

Papai Curumiassú			
Form - : A B :			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 – 9	A	9	
10 - 23	B	14	
Repeat 1 – 19			20 – 23 1 st Ending
24 - 30	Coda	5	

Key – C Minor

Time signature and tempo markings: 4/4 (irregularly alternating with 3/4) Lento

langoroso (♩= 88)

Vocal range: G3 – E5

The melody is angular, with many fourth and fifth intervals, and a phrase featuring an arpeggio that moves from G3 to C5. The tonality of the vocal line is clearly C minor, but each phrase ends in Eb4, the mediant of the C minor scale, giving the melody a feeling of continuity. The dynamic is very soft throughout the entire piece, adequate for a lullaby.

The repeated G4 on every beat of the piano part for the duration of the song creates a pedal point that imitates the swinging of the hammock. The harmony is ambiguous, hovering between the relative tonalities of C minor and Eb major. The pitches C, Eb, G, Bb and F are present in almost all chords. The Db major chord in measures 6, 12, and 18 works as the Neapolitan of C minor. In contrast, the dominance of

the Eb – Bb interval in the lower register of the left hand, which starts on measure 16, brings the final sonority of the song closer to Eb Major.

The meter oscillates between 4/4 and 3/4 irregularly, and the melody does not follow the natural inflections of speech, like most Brazilian folk songs. The popular music version of this song is sung in a regular 2/4 meter, and one can only wonder if Villa-Lobos heard this tune sung irregularly and at a very slow tempo, or if he decided to modify it intentionally. The song ends with the shooing away of the rooster spoken by the singer (Example 6-7).

The pedal tone and the ambiguous harmony are definite characteristics of the style associated with Villa-Lobos' Paris years, but the general atmosphere of this particular song also recalls the impressionist style from the prior decade as exemplified by eleventh chord arpeggios and the occasional use of a chord based on the whole-tone scale.

The musical score for "Papai Curumiassú" (measures 24-28) is presented in a two-staff format. The top staff is for the voice, and the bottom staff is for the piano. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line begins with a fermata over a whole note, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The piano accompaniment features a complex harmonic structure with a prominent pedal point in the left hand. Performance markings include "(sem harp.)", "ppp", "rall.", and "(sem harp.)". The vocal line has markings: "(quasi decl.) gliss.", "declamando", and a triplet of eighth notes.

Example 6-7 "Papai Curumiassú," mm. 24-28.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca/ 3, Papae curumiassú: canção de rede os Caboclos do Pará*. voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 2.

4. “Xangô”

This song is based on a *ponto cantado* from the Afro-Brazilian religion known as *candomblé*, honoring the *orixá* Xangô, king of fire, lightning, and thunder. The song is constructed over a dynamic ostinato, similar in character to how a *ponto cantado* would be traditionally performed with a rhythmic accompaniment specific to that *orixá*, being played by drums. Piano rolls with clashing intervals of minor seconds imitate the sound of thunder, while fast and wide glissandos depict lightning.

Xangô!

Ôlê gondilê

Ôlá lá!

Gon gon gon gon gon dilá!

Xangô

Ôlê gondilé

Olê lê!

Gon gon gon gon gon dilé!

The lyrics above are from the 1948 Eschig edition and differ from the choral version published by Irmãos Vitale, which presents many differences in punctuation and in the spelling of the word *gondilê*.²⁴⁵ ²⁴⁶ This is because the words other than “Xangô” are improvised vocables with no definite meaning that are used onomatopoeically primarily for rhythmic effect, a common feature of earlier *ponto cantados*.

²⁴⁵ Gondilê, gondilé, gendilê, and gendilé.

²⁴⁶ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Xangô, versão para coro a cappella*, 2nd volume, n. 24 (São Paulo: Editora Irmãos Vitale, 1950).

Table 6-4 “Xangô”

Xangô			
Form - : A A' :			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 – 9	A	9	
10 - 17	A'	8	
Repeat 1 – 17			
18 - 19	Coda	5	

Key – G Minor

Time Signature and Tempo Markings – 4 (4/4) Animado (q= 120)

Vocal range – G4 – D5

The melody was rhythmically expanded and modified from the original version (Example 6-8) by adding more triplets and creating a polyrhythmic effect against the piano accompaniment (Example 6-9). The song also sits in a higher tessitura, which helps the voice with the loud dynamics required of the song, which goes from *forte* to *fortissimo*.

Canto de Xangô

Encantação

RIO DE JANEIRO



Example 6-8 “Xangô,” original theme.²⁴⁷

CANTO

Animado (120 = ♩)

Xan - - gô! - - ô - -

PIANO

Animado

$f > p$

$sf > p$ $sf > p$ $sf > p$ $sf > p$ $sf > p$ $sf > p$

- lê gon - di - lê - - ô - - lá - - lá!

f ff

Example 6-9 “Xangô” (Villa-Lobos), mm (1-5).²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ Juliana Ripke da Costa, “Canto de xangô: uma tópica afro-brasileira,” *Orfeu - Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Música - CEART – UDESC*, no. 1 (June 2016): 60.

²⁴⁸ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca / 4, Xangô: canto fetiche de Makumba (do Brasil)*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

The accompaniment is simple, marked by an ostinato with no variation in the left hand, only interrupted by a dissonant roll of minor seconds in measures 5 and 13 (Example 6-9), and by a glissando in measures 9 and 17. The right hand completes the harmony with chords voiced in open position, again ambiguous, suggesting at times the relative major, but also remaining grounded in G minor. The ambiguity is further accentuated by the prominent use of fifths and fourths harmonic intervals.

This is the song that most closely resembles the style of Stravinsky in his *Rite of Spring*. The aforementioned ostinato, rolls and glissandi in violent crescendo are very similar to what can be found in this ballet's score.

The orchestration chosen by Villa-Lobos for this song in its later version is for voice, two bassoons, two French horns, timpani in G and D, snare, bass drums, harp, piano and string quartet.

5. “Estrela é Lua Nova”

Like “Xangô,” “Estrela é Lua Nova” is a tune collected from the Afro-Brazilian religious tradition. With simple lyrics, probably referencing the entity known as *Caboclo da Lua Nova*, this is one of most performed song from *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, and just like “Nozani-ná,” it is perhaps better known in its mixed choir *a capella* version.

Estrela do céu é lua nova	(The) Star in the sky is new moon
Cravejada de ouro makumbêbê,	Bejeweled in gold, <i>makumbêbê</i> ,
Óia ²⁴⁹ makumbêbê,	Look at <i>makumbêbê</i> ,

²⁴⁹ “*Olha a.*” The imperative “look at” in broken Portuguese.

Óia makumbaribá.

Look at *makumbaribá*.

The variations of the word *macumba* in this song are used for onomatopoeic effect and do not have additional meaning beyond being a play on the original word. This is evidenced by the way in which Villa-Lobos indiscriminately changes the word not only in this version, but to greater degree in the choral arrangement of this same tune.

Gonzaga do Monti believes that Villa-Lobos uses this word, which would be easily identifiable as being related to Afro-Brazilian religious practices, to create “. . . a mystic sonic landscape.”²⁵⁰ The text is sung four times, once in each section.

Table 6-5 “Estrela é Lua Nova”

Estrela é Lua Nova			
Form - : A A' :			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 – 4	Introduction	5	
5 - 12	A	8	
13 - 21	A'	9	21 1 st ending
Repeat 13 - 20			22 – 23 2 nd Ending

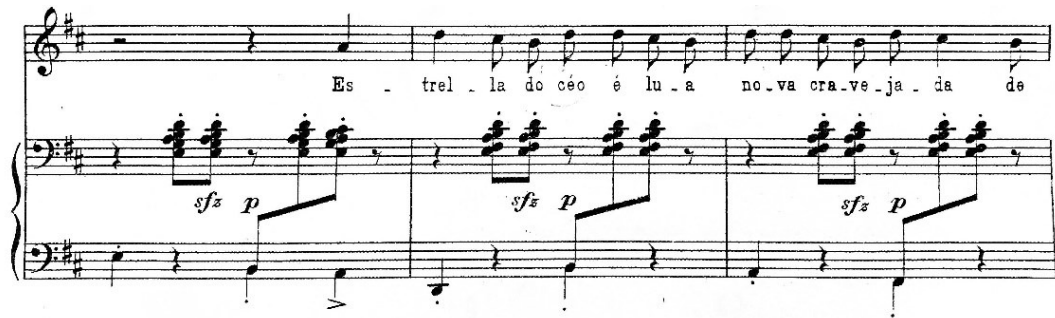
Key – D Major

Time Signature and tempo markings – 2/2 Um pouco animado (h= 84)

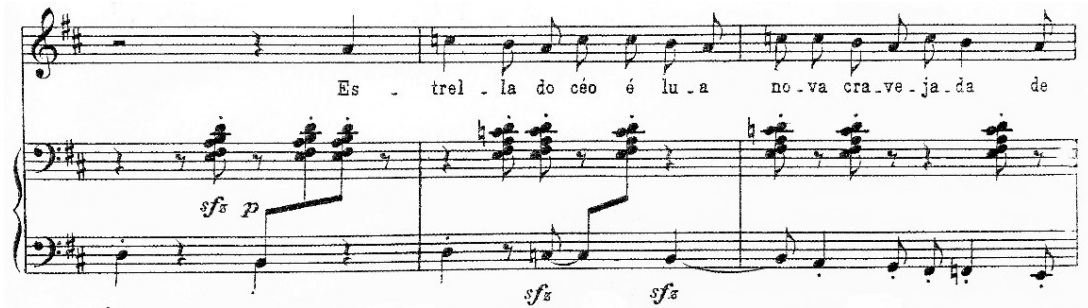
Vocal range – D4 – E5

²⁵⁰ Ednardo Monteiro Gonzaga do Monti, “Canto Orfeônico: Villa-Lobos e as Representações Sociais da Era Vargas” (master’s thesis, Universidade Católica de Petrópolis, 2009), 100.

The melody consists essentially of a repeated short descending phrase, which is modified in A' by sequencing the motif downward to start on a C[♭] and later modulating the second to last phrase one fifth higher. The C[♭] in the second section suggests modulation to the Myxolidian mode. The melodic rhythm is regular for the first half of the verse (Example 6-10); and varied for the second half, adding triplets and syncopations.



Example 6-10 “Estrela é Lua Nova,” beginning of A, mm. 4-6.²⁵¹



Example 6-11 “Estrela é Lua Nova,” beginning of A', mm. 13-15.²⁵²

²⁵¹ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 5, *Estrela e lua nova : canto fetiche de Makumba*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

²⁵² Ibid, 2.

As shown above, the harmony is clearly defined by the melody and the bass line, but the chords in the piano's right hand have extended harmony, creating a tone cluster effect that, without additional context, blur the function of each chord. For example, the chord in measure 5 (Example 6-10) is a D Major with added E and B, hinting at a thirteenth chord and creating three intervals of a second. The rhythm of the accompaniment is an ostinato for most of the song and, as in the case of the previous song, is probably inspired by the accompaniment used in Afro-Brazilian rituals. Villa-Lobos' choice of articulation also hints at the *maxixe* rhythm, as evidenced by the sforzandi in measures 4–6 (Example 6-10).

Further hint of the *maxixe* can be found in measures 14–15 (Example 6-11), where the piano left hand plays a phrase typical of a *chorinho* bass line, traditionally performed by a seven-string guitar. The harmony in the A' section uses a different harmonic language, such as the inclusion of half-diminished chords and secondary dominants, that are also typical of the *chorinho* style of maxixe and that departs at places from the traditional Afro-Brazilian source material.

Villa-Lobos orchestrated this song for voice, two flutes, oboe, clarinet in B \flat , two bassoons, three French Horns, harp, and string quintet.

6. “Viola quebrada”

This is the first of the three *modinhas* included in *Canções Típicas Brasileiras*, and it references the early nineteenth-century popular version of *modinha*. The source melody is a song by Mário de Andrade, imitating the vernacular Portuguese of the

countryside, and it was dedicated to the poet Oswald de Andrade and his romantic interest, the painter Tarsila do Amaral.

Quando da brisa no açoite
A frô da noite se curvo
Fui s'incontrá com a Maróca meu amô.
Eu tive n'arma um choque duro
Quando ao muro já no escuro
Meu oiá andô buscando a cara dela e num
achô

(Refrão)

Minha vióla gemeu,
Meu coração estremeceu
Minha vióla quebrou
Teu coração me deixou

Minha Maróca arresorveu
Por gosto seu me abandoná,
Porque os fadista nunca sabe trabaia.
Isso é bestêra que das frô
Que bria e chêra a noite inteira
Vem após as fruta que dá gosto
saboreá.

(Refrão)

Pur causa déla eu sou rapaiz
Muito capaiz de trabaia
E os dia intero, e a noite intera capiná,

When from the breeze, under the whip,
The night flower curved,
I went to meet with Maróca, my love.
I had in my soul a hard blow
When by the wall, in darkness,
My gaze searched for her face and didn't
find it.

(Refrain)

My viola²⁵³ moaned,
My heart trembled,
My viola broke,
Your heart left me.

My Maróca decided
By a whim to leave me, because the *fado*
Singers never know how to work.
This is silly because from the flowers
That shine and smell the whole night
Come the fruits that are such a pleasure to
savor.

(Refrain)

Because of her I am a guy
Very able to work, and all day long,
And all night long pulling weeds.

²⁵³ *Viola caipira*. A popular Brazilian version of the acoustic guitar.

Eu sei carpi purquê minh'arma
 Está arada arroteada
 Capinada c'oas foiçada dessa
 luis do teu oiá.

I know how to clear off weeds
 because my soul is plowed, weeded,
 Cleared off by the sickle
 that is your gaze.

(Refrão)

(Refrain)

This long text is a beautiful imitation of the popular poetic style, featuring vernacular Portuguese, many regional idiomatic expressions, and free rhythm.

Table 6-6 “Viola quebrada”

Viola Quebrada			
Form - Couplet-Refrain			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 - 8	Introduction	8	
10 - 17	A	8	
18 - 26	Refrain	9	Slower tempo, Optional choir

Key – E Minor

Time Signature and tempo markings – 2 (2/2) Allegretto (q= 144) – Andante - 6/4 Quasi lento

Vocal range – B3 – E5

The melody is constructed with one note per syllable, imitating a fast declamation that features mostly descending phrases, as is the case with many rural styles of popular song. The refrain is typical of older urban *modinhas*, slower and with short phrases separated by rests, creating the effect of “musical sighs” so often associated with the style. Another common characteristic of the *modinha* presented in the refrain is the use of

appoggiatura that produces rhythmically weak cadences for each phrase. The choice by Villa-Lobos to add an optional second voice, sung by a chorus, gives the refrain a characteristic color associated with rural popular music, which is usually harmonized below the melody in parallel thirds. This brings the sound of the refrain closer to the regional character of the A section.

The introduction features a rhythmic ostinato that imitates an acoustic guitar accompaniment (Example 6-12), whose rhythm is then slightly modified in the A section. Once again, Villa-Lobos transforms what was once a simple harmony by introducing polytonal ambiguity and tone clusters. This harmonic ambiguity is maintained throughout the refrain, which ends in an Em chord with a 6–5 suspension, which, due to the left hand of the piano not following the resolution of the suspension, can also be heard as C – CMaj7 cadence in the first inversion (Example 6-13).



Example 6-12 “Viola quebrada,” mm 1-2.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 6, *Viola quebrada : modinha de M. de A*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.



Example 6-13 “Viola quebrada,” mm. 23-26.²⁵⁵

The harmony in the refrain is particularly dissonant, with extended chords and constant downward motion in the inner voices, which follow the second voice of the chorus. The effect is a hymn-like choral texture, perhaps a reflection of Villa-Lobos early admiration for the music of J. S. Bach which here also combine with the aforementioned array of modernist elements.

7. “Adeus ema”

“Adeus ema” is a strophic song that is characterized by its difficult pronunciation of the text, which features the constant displacement of where the syllable stresses should fall. This is a common issue with many strophic songs. However, in Villa-Lobos’ version, the syncopated nature of the melody further accentuates this effect. The choice appears to be intentional, since the lyrics discuss how different words are pronounced differently in different places, and creates new words by changing the order of syllables of other words.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, 2.

The source material is described in the score as a popular tune from the northern part of Minas Gerais, a state in the Southeast region of Brazil. It is also described as *desafio*, a popular form of competitive poetry/song found in most regions of the country.

Adeus ema, adeus ema
Dá licença eu vou fallá
Os nome na minha terra
É diferente dos de cá.

Goodbye rhea, goodbye rhea
Excuse me, I must say
The names in my land
Are different from the ones here.

Adeus ema, adeus ema
Uma amostra eu quero dá
Tabóca não é tabóca
que a gente faz gaita e toca
Tabóca é bocatá.

Goodbye rhea, goodbye rhea
A sample I wish to give
*Tabóca*²⁵⁶ is not *tabóca*
With which we make *gaita*²⁵⁷ and play,
Tabóca is bocatá.

Adeus ema, adeus ema
Vancê faz bem me assuntá
De tudo que eu vou dizê
Vancê só pode é lucrá.

Goodbye rhea, goodbye rhea
You better pay attention
From everything I have to say
You can only profit.

Adeus ema, adeus ema
Barata é rataba, Maria não é Maria,
Mãe de Deus e de Deus fia, Maria é
riamá.

Goodbye rhea, goodbye rhea
Cockroach is ratába, Maria is not Maria
Mother and daughter of God, Maria is
riamá.

²⁵⁶ Bamboo-like plant used to make the Brazilian *Pife*, a type of flute used in different kinds of popular music.

²⁵⁷ *Gaita* is the modern Brazilian Portuguese word for the harmonica, but in this case it is in reference to the *gaita de índio*, a flute used in the *caboclinho* tradition from the Northeast of Brazil, the same region where the *repente* tradition started.

Adeus ema, adeus ema
 Dá licença eu vou fallá
 Nós já contamo que chega
 Por isso vamo pará.

Goodbye rhea, goodbye rhea
 Excuse me, I must say
 We have already told enough
 And because of that we will stop.

The lyrics are in a form of Portuguese vernacular with many grammatical and spelling variations. The underlined words in the translation are vocables that invert the syllables of the words *tabóca*, *barata* (cockroach), and *Maria*. The reason for the reference to the great rhea is not clear here, and it might just be a commonly occurring refrain called *mote*, typical of the *desafio* and around which verses are improvised.

Table 6-7 “Adeus ema”

Adeus Ema			
Form - : A A' : A			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 - 2	Intro	2	
3 - 14	A	12	
15 - 26	A'	12	
Repeat 3 - 26			
27 - 38	A	12	

Key – C major

Time Signature and tempo markings – 2/4 Un peu moderé (no metronome marking in the score, approximately $\text{♩} = 100$).

Vocal range – E4 – E5

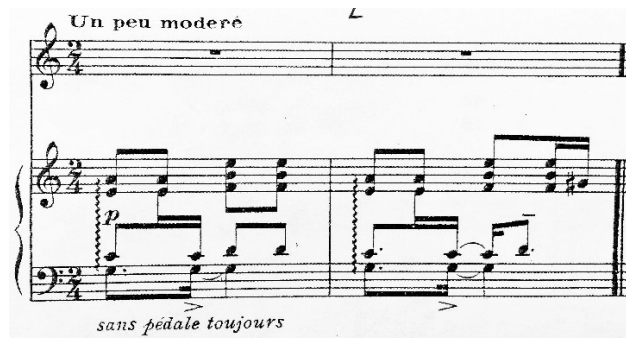
The vocal line of this song is syncopated, with one note per syllable, and as mentioned before, there are many points in the song in which the stressed syllable of the word falls on a weak part of the beat. The melody features small intervals, with the exception of an ascending seventh interval that marks the end of every A section (Example 6-14). These section endings also have a long sustained note that makes the formal structure very clear.



Example 6-14 “Adeus ema,” end of section A. mm 8-11.²⁵⁸

The accompaniment once again presents a rhythmic ostinato based on the *maxixe* rhythm (Example 6-15). The harmony is a simple I – V – I progression, but there are many added notes that complicate the tonality, with chromatic movement in the inner voices and chords with as many as six different pitches.

²⁵⁸ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 7, “Adeus Ema”: desafio: thème populaire du Nord de “Minas Geraes,” voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.



Example 6-15 “Adeus ema,” mm. 1-2.²⁵⁹

The accentuation of the accompaniment is unusual and irregular. It begins where the accompaniment moves to the dominant, but it also appears in other, more unexpected places. In the first instance, the accentuation marks the upbeats, perhaps in reference to the cymbals used to accompany the *bandas de pife*²⁶⁰, a typical folk ensemble from the northeastern part of the country. The reference to the *tabóca*, the plant used to make the *pife* flute, suggests that these accentuations were put here deliberately by the composer to evoke this tradition. Regarding the other, much less regular uses of accents in the accompaniment, the Max Eschig’s review of Villa-Lobos’ songs suggests that these are not misprints, but more likely a representation of the improvisation associated with the style, “a rhythmic counterpoint to the metric and harmonic regularity.”²⁶¹

²⁵⁹Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca/ 7, "Adeus Ema": desafio: thème populaire du Nord de "Minas Geraes,"* voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

²⁶⁰ The ensemble is typically formed by two *Pife* flutes, snare drum, cymbals and a *zabumba*, a type of bass drum.

²⁶¹ Nahim Marum, *Revisão crítica das canções para a voz e piano de Heitor Villa-Lobos: publicadas pela Editora Max Eschig /Nahim Marum* (São Paulo: Cultura Acadêmica, 2010), 65.

8. Pálida Madona

This song is a *modinha* composed by João José da Costa Júnior built on the first strophes of a poem by Castro Alves. The score offers no information about the source, so one cannot be sure if Villa-Lobos knew who the author of the lyrics or the music was. This is a good example of the *belcanto*-inspired style of *modinha*, with the formal character the text reinforcing the notion of a more old-fashioned style.

Ó Pálida Madona de meus sonhos,	Oh pale <i>Madonna</i> from my dreams,
Bela filha dos cerros de Enggandi.	Beautiful daughter of Enggandi's ²⁶² hills.
Vem inspirar os cantos do poeta,	Come inspire the poet's song,
Rósa branca da Lyra de David.	White rose from David's lyre.

Todo o amor que em meu peito repousava,	All the love that rested in my chest,
Como o orvalho das noites no relento.	Like the dew of the nights in the open.
A teus pés elevou-se como as nuvens,	At your feet, rose like the clouds,
Que se perdem no azul do firmamento!	Which lose themselves in the firmament's blue.

The source poem is “Pensamento de Amor”, a sensual poem by Castro Alves. The biblical references are to the story of David from *I Samuel* in the Old Testament. According to the text, David hid from Saul in the caves of Ein Gedi. This oasis is also mentioned in the *Song of Songs*, which may also be referenced in the lyrics given that the daughter of Ein Gedi is said to inspire the poet's song. The poem has a very formal structure, with verse lines of ten or more syllables.

²⁶² *Enggandi* is an old Portuguese transliteration of Ein Gedi, the oasis in Israel, mentioned many times in biblical script.

Table 6-8 “Pálida Madona”

Pálida Madona			
Form - : A B :			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 - 4	Introduction	4	Lent
5 - 8	A	4	Adagio
9 - 18	B	10	Poco piu mosso
18 - 21	Intro (Repetition)	4	
Repeat 5 - 20	A		22 - 2 nd Ending

Key – C Minor

Time Signature and tempo markings – 4/4 Lent – Adagio – Poco piu mosso (no metronome marking in the score, approximately $\text{♩} = 40$ and $\text{♩} = 65$)

Vocal range – C4 – D5

The vocal line presents arch-shaped phrases with triplets in polyrhythmic counterpoint to the eighth notes in the piano accompaniment, also emulating the eighteenth-century *belcanto cantabile* style. The text is placed syllabically in the melody. The A section is in *parlando* style while the B section, more *cantabile*, is expanded by repeating verses. The piece ends by means of a dissolution, with the last phrase being modified to end in the tonic.

For the accompaniment of this melody, the piano takes a more prominent role than in the other songs, having its own separate theme for the introduction, dialoguing with the vocal melody, and presenting a variety of textures and rhythmic movement. The entire accompaniment is in clear imitation of a guitar, with the introduction setting the

atmosphere of the piece by emulating the urban popular style of the *seresta* (Example 6-16).

Lent

PIANO *p*

Adagio

M.G.

rall.

pp

Ó pal - li - da Ma - do - na de meus
mor - que em meu pei - to re pou -

rall.

so - nhos, bel - la fi - - lha dos cer - ros de Enggandi. vem inspi -
sa - va, como o or - va - - lho das noi - tes no re - len - - to, a teus

p

rall.

Example 6-16 “Pálida Madona,” mm. 1-8.²⁶³

²⁶³ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 8, *O' Pallida Madona: modinha antiga: poésie populaire*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 1.

In the A section, the piano begins with a simple accompaniment that just marks the downbeats, concluding with a harmonized melodic phrase made of a descending chromatic chord, which highlights the parallel quartal harmony (Example 6-16). This gesture is again evocative of the acoustic guitar, for which the execution of such parallel chromatic movement is easily achieved by sliding the left hand up the neck of the instrument. The B section moves to the relative major and the tempo change is marked by the beginning of a characteristic *modinha* accompaniment figure, with moments of chromaticism heard in the half-diminished chords. After returning to C minor in measures 15–16, the song finishes with a recapitulation of the introduction.

There are not many elements from French modernism in this song, and the final result of the arrangement is much closer to the original source than other songs in this set. Because the same is true with the next song, another *modinha*, it may be possible that Villa-Lobos' familiarity with and fondness for the genre influenced how little he decided to change its elements. Nevertheless, these two songs are the ones closest in style to some of the songs in the collection *Seréstas*, which dates from the second half of the 1920s.

9. “Tú passaste por este jardim”

This *modinha* by Alfredo Dutra with lyrics by Catulo da Paixão Cearense was harmonized by Villa-Lobos, clearly taking inspiration from the instrumental *chorinho* style. It is one of the longest songs in the set.

1.

Tu passaste por este jardim
Sinto aqui certo odor merencório.
Este branco e donoso jasmim
N'um dilúvio de aromas pendeu.
Os arcanjos choraram por mim,
Sobre as folhas pendentes do galho,
As estrelas cadentes do orvalho
Que a luz de seus olhos brilhantes verteu.

2.

Esta relva, que vejo a murchar,
E onde, penso, caiu o teu lenço,
Transformou-se depois n'um altar,
Exalando aleluias de incenso.
Muita coisa tu deixaste aqui
N'este orgulho das auras mimosas:
Um barulho de folhas cheirosas
de plantas saudosas, falando de ti.

3.

Tu passaste, que, de quando em quando,
Vejo as rosas no hastil lacrimando
Das corolas de todas as cores
As minhas angústias abertas em flores.
Neste ramo, que ainda se agita,
Uma roxa saudade palpita!
E este cravo, no ardor dos ciúmes,
Derrama os perfumes n'um poema de amor.

1.

You passed through this garden
I feel in here a certain odor of melancholy.
This white and elegant jasmine
Tilted in a deluge of scents.
The archangels²⁶⁴ cried for me,
Under the leaves hanging from the branch,
The falling stars of the dew
That the light of your shining eyes poured.

2.

This turf that I see withering,
And where, I think, your handkerchief fell.
Transformed later into an altar
Exhaling “alleluias” of incense.
Many things you left here
In this pride of the *Auras Mimosas*.²⁶⁵
A noise of scented leafs
Of wistful plants, talking about you.

3.

You passed, so that every now and then,
I see the roses in the stem tearing up
From the corollas in all colors
My anguishes open in flowers.
In this branch that still stirs,
A purple *saudade*²⁶⁶ palpitates!
And this carnation, in the ardor of jealousy,
Pours the perfumes in a love poem.

²⁶⁴ In reference to the *Lamium Galeobdolon*, a wild flower known as Yellow Archangel or Aluminum Plant.

²⁶⁵ Probably in reference to the *Mimosa Pudica*, a plant that closes its leaves when touched, known popularly in English as Shy Plant or Sleepy Plant.

²⁶⁶ In reference to the *Scabiosa*, a purple flower also known as *saudade* (longing) or widow's flower.

4.

De um suspiro deixaste o calor
N'este calix de neve, estrelado!
N'este branco e gentil "monsenhor"
Vê se o Iris de um beijo, esmaltado
Tu deixaste, n'um halo de dor,
Nas violetas magoadas sombrias,
A tristeza das Ave-Marias
Que rezam teu lábios a luz do Senhor.

5.

Vejo a imagem da minha ilusão
N'esta rosa prostrada no chão!
Meus afetos descansam nos leitos
D'estes lindos amores perfeitos.
Como chora o vernal jasmineiro,
Que me lembra o sabor de teu cheiro!
Este cravo sanguíneo é uma chaga,
Que se alaga no rubor da cor.

4.

Of a sight you left the warmth
In this starry Snow Calyx!
In this white and gentle "*monsenhor*"²⁶⁷
One sees the Iris of an enameled kiss.
You left, in a halo of pain,
In the hurt and somber violets,
The sadness of the *Ave-Marias*²⁶⁸
Which your lips pray by the Lord's light.

5.

I see the image of my illusion
In this prostrated rose on the ground.
My affections rest in the beds
Of these beautiful Johnny Jump ups.
How the vernal Jasmine tree cries,
Which reminds me of your scent's flavor!
This sanguineous carnation is a sore
That floods in the blush of the color.

²⁶⁷ A popular name in Brazil for the *Crysanthemum* flower.

²⁶⁸ *Coix Lacryma-jobi* or Job's tears, known in Brazil as *Ave-Maria* or *Lágrimas de Nossa Senhora* (Our Lady's Tears).

6.	6.
As gentis magnólias, em vão,	The gentle magnolias, in vain,
Muito invejam teu rosto odoroso,	Envy much your odorous face,
Rosto que tem a conformação	A face that has the conformation
De um suspiro adejando saudoso.	Of a hovering longing sigh.
E estes lírios têm a presunção	This lilies have the presumption
De imitar, em seus níveis brancos,	To imitate, in their snowy whiteness,
Esses dois ramalhetes de amores,	These two bouquets of love,
Andores de flores n'um seio em botão.	<i>Andores</i> ²⁶⁹ of flowers in a budding bosom.

The text is divided into six verses, with each line of each verse being nine syllables long, except for the last line, which is eleven syllables long. The exception is a variant found in the final line of the fifth verse, which also ends in nine syllables.

The poem is masterfully constructed. The rhyme scheme is extremely varied, highlighting the more “high-brow” aspects of Catulo da Paixão Cearense’s work:

Table 6-9 “Tu passaste por este jardim” – Rhyme Scheme.

Strophe	Rhyme Scheme
1	ABACADDC
2	ABABCDDC
3	AABBCCDD
4	ABABCDDC
5	AABBCCDD (Internal rhyme, finishing as C from the last strophe)
6	ABABCDDC

²⁶⁹ *Andor* is a platform that carries the images of saints in religious processions. They are adorned with different flowers.

The text talks about the poet's loved one having passed through a garden, and it presents a constant use of clever plant and flower metaphors to depict the change in the garden and in his life prompted by her presence.

Table 6-10 “Tu passaste por este jardim”

Tu passaste por este jardim			
Form - A A B B A C C A			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 - 4	Introduction	4	
5 - 20	A	16	
Repeat 5 - 19			21 – 2 nd Ending
22 - 29	B	8	
Repeat 22 - 27			30 – 31 – 2 nd Ending
32 - 47	A	16	
48 - 55	C	8	
Repeat 48 - 53			56 – 57 - 2 nd Ending
58 - 74	A	17	Added measure by sustaining last note

Key – F Major

Time Signature and tempo markings – 2/2 Très peu modéré – Modéré (no metronome marking in the score, approximately $h=45$ and $h=55$)

Vocal range – Bb3 – F5

This is the most challenging melody for the vocalist in the whole set. Highly instrumental in character, the vocal melody imitates woodwind instruments from the *chorinho* tradition and it features a fairly wide range and abrupt changes in tessitura.

The melodic rhythm is syncopated and alternates between binary and ternary subdivisions throughout the piece, requiring much precision from the interpreter. The C section is particularly difficult, starting with a *messa di voce* in the highest pitch of the vocal line, followed by two downward phrases hitting the lowest pitch in only four measures.

Pronunciation and diction also present a serious challenge in measure 58, which needs to be addressed in any interpretation (Example 6-17). Deformations like these can be expected in strophic music, but this one sounds particularly strange to the ear of any Portuguese speaker, and the problem is aggravated because it happens with the name of one of the flowers that are the central theme of the poetry. The stressed syllable in the word *magnólias*, is marked by the accent. The way the melody is written displaces the stress to the syllable “li.” The singer should shift the first two syllables of *magnólias* by prolonging the last syllable of the preceding word (*gentis*) into the C found at the upbeat of the first beat, having the correct stressed syllable of *magnólias* then fall on the second beat. In response to this change, the performer must then also elide the final two syllables of the work, transforming “li” into “lias,” a much better solution than the one presented in the score. This solution is commonly applied by Brazilian singers, but most recordings by foreign interpreters follow what is printed in the score.



Example 6-17 “Tu passaste por este jardim,” m. 58.²⁷⁰

The accompaniment is more traditional in style than other songs in the set, with almost no influence from early-twentieth century European art music. It is characterized by a straightforward functional harmony with economically added chromaticism in emulation of the *chorinho* style. The accompaniment also references the *chorinho* style by evoking the sound of the strings and the woodwinds from that ensemble. The strings are represented by the staccato chords and bass movement of the left hand, while the woodwinds are represented by the fast downward arpeggios in the A section that “respond” to the melody, a role typically played by the clarinet or flute in the *chorinho* ensemble.

The character of the accompaniment remains the same throughout all the sections of the entire piece, giving much prominence to the vocal line. The form of the piece is a rondo, with irregular repetition of the sections.

²⁷⁰ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca*/ 9, *Tu passaste por este jardim: modinha carioca* ; *palavras de Catulo Cearense* ; *thema de Alfredo Dutra*, voice and piano score (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 6.

10. “Cabôca de Caxangá”

The last of the ten original *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* is an *embolada*, with text by Catulo da Paixão Cearense imitating the regional Portuguese vernacular from the Northeast of Brazil. The song was scored originally for a quartet of soloists and chorus, but it can and is often performed as a solo voice and piano work.

Cabôca di Caxangá
Minha cabôca, vem cá.

*Cabocla*²⁷¹ from *Caxangá*²⁷²
My *cabocla*, come here.

1.
Laurindo Punga, Chico Dunga, Zé Vicente
Essa gente tão valente
Do sertão de Jatobá
E o danado do afamado Zeca Lima
Tudo chora numa prima,
Tudo qué ti conquistá.

1.
Laurindo Punga, Chico Dunga, Zé Vicente
These very brave people
From Jatobá's²⁷³ *sertão*²⁷⁴.
And the naughty and notorious Zeca Lima,
They all cry in a *prima*²⁷⁵,
They all want to win you.

Cabôca di Caxangá
Minha cabôca, vem cá

Cabocla from *Caxangá*
My *cabocla*, come here.

2.

²⁷¹ *Caboclo* is the Portuguese word for mixed race people of Indigenous and European descent.

²⁷² *Caxangá*, here, is most likely the name of a city or region. The word comes from the Indigenous Tupi-Guarani language, and it means “wide woods.”

²⁷³ There are a few of places in the Northeast of Brazil called *Jatobá*, and it is not clear to which one of them the poet making reference in here.

²⁷⁴ *Sertão* is one of the regions into which the Northeast of Brazil is divided, which is marked by a semi-desert climate and vegetation.

²⁷⁵ The *prima* is the first string of a guitar, the meaning here would be that they would “weep” on the first string of the guitar while serenading.

2.
Quiria vê si essa gente também sente
Tanto amô como eu senti
Quando eu te vi em Cariri!
Atravessava um regato no quartau
E escutava lá no mato
O canto triste do urutáu.

Cabôca, demônio mau
Sou triste como o urutau.

3.
Há muito tempo lá nas moita das
taquara
Junto ao monte das crivara
Eu não te vejo tu passá!
Todo os dia, intá a boca da noite
Eu te canto uma toada
Lá debaixo do indaiá.

Vem cá, cabôca, vem cá
Rainha di Caxangá.

I would like to see if these people also feel
As much love as I have felt
When I saw you in Cariri²⁷⁶!
I was crossing a stream riding the gelding
And I was listening from the woods
The sad *urutáu*²⁷⁷ song.

Cabocla, evil demon
I am sad as the *urutáu*.

3.
For a long time, there, in the *taquara*²⁷⁸ bushes
Next to the hill of the *crivara*²⁷⁹.
I don't see you passing!
Every day, until the *boca da noite*²⁸⁰
I sing a tune for you
There, under the *indaiá*.²⁸¹

Come here, *cabocla*, come here
Queen of *Caxangá*.

4.
On the sacred night of Christmas, by the

²⁷⁶ *Cariri* is a region of the Northeastern state of Ceará.

²⁷⁷ *Urutau*, also known as “mother of the moon” or “ghost bird,” is a songbird that lives in the warmest regions of South America and has a very characteristic and melancholic song. There are many sad legends about this bird in different cultures of the continent, and its song is often considered a bad omen in Brazilian popular culture.

²⁷⁸ *Taquara* is a name used for many different species of graminea plants.

²⁷⁹ No definition or reference for this word was found. It is a possible conjugation of the verb *crivar* (to pelt), but in this particular phrase the word is a noun.

²⁸⁰ *Boca da Noite*, literally translating to “mouth of the night,” is a popular expression in the Northeast of Brazil that means 8 pm.

²⁸¹ *Indaiá* is a palm tree native to Brazil.

4.

Na noite santa do Natal na
encruzilhada

Eu te esperei e discantei

Inté o rompê da manhã

Quando eu saia do arraiaí o só
nascia

E lá na grota já se ouvia

Pipiando a jassanã

Cabôca, toda a manhã

Sou triste como acauã!

5.

Vinha trotando pela istrada na mujica

Vi-te embaixo da oiticica

Cunversando cum o Manoé!

Sinti, cabôca, istremecê, dentro do
couro

Arreliado, atropaiado,

O coração do meu quicé.

Cabôca, inda tenho fê

Di fazê figa ao Manoé!

crossroad

I have waited for you and *discantei*²⁸²

Until the break of the morning

When I was leaving the party, the sun was
rising

And there at the grotto it was already heard

Peeping the *jaçanã*.²⁸³

Cabocla, every morning

I am sad as the *acauã*.²⁸⁴

5.

I was trotting down the road (*na mujica*²⁸⁵)

I saw you under the *oiticica*²⁸⁶

Talking with Manuel!

I felt, *cabocla*, shaking, inside the
skin

Teased, jumbled

The heart of my knife.

Cabocla, I still have faith

That I will express my grudge to Manuel!

6.

²⁸² *Descantar*, in the popular language of the Northeast, means to sing the improvised style of *repente* or *embolada*.

²⁸³ *Jaçanã* is a common bird in South America that lives in the margins of rivers and swamps.

²⁸⁴ *Acauã* is a small bird from the falcon family.

²⁸⁵ The word *mujica* is a traditional dish from central Brazil, but it makes no sense in this phrase. No other meaning for the word could be found.

²⁸⁶ *Oiticica* is a tree with yellow flowers native to the northeast of Brazil.

6.	<i>Cabra danado</i> ²⁸⁷ , I climb the <i>gameleira</i> ²⁸⁸	
Cabra danado, assubo pela gamelêra,	Like the slyest jaguar	
Cumo a onça mais matrêra,	The fastest <i>punangê</i> ²⁸⁹	
O mais ligêro punangê!	I do everything except making it want me,	
Eu faço tudo, só não faço é mi querê	Your heart, more stirring	
Teu coração mais buliçoso	Than the <i>sací-pererê</i> . ²⁹⁰	
Du que o sací-pererê.		
	Why God made you, why,	
Pru quê ti fêz Deus, pruguê,	Of the same color as the <i>ipê</i> . ²⁹¹	
Da cô das frô dus ipê?		
7.	7.	
Mas quando eu canto na viola a	But when I sing the nature on	the
natureza,	viola ²⁹²	
Tu não vê cumo a tristeza	Don't you see how the sadness	
Mi põe triste e jururú?	Makes me sad and melancholic	
Assim eu canto a minha dô, só quando	This way I sing my pain, only when	the
a noite	night	
Vem fechá tôdas as frô	Comes to close every flower	
I abre a frô du imbirussú.	And open the <i>imbiruçu</i> ²⁹³ flowers.	
	<i>Cabocla</i> , a demon you are!	
Cabôca, um demônio és tu!	Oh, <i>imbiruçu</i> flower.	
Ó frô du imbirussú.		

The original song has many different versions and has two more verses than the ones included in the Villa-Lobos version. The text, just like the previous song, evokes

²⁸⁷ *Cabra danado* is a popular expression that means a brave, valiant man.

²⁸⁸ *Gameleira* is a popular name given for many trees, including the fig tree.

²⁸⁹ This is obviously a local vernacular name for an animal, but no reference could be found.

²⁹⁰ The *sací-pererê* is a mythical creature from Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Brazilian folklore, a one-legged black child that is always depicted smoking a pipe and playing tricks on people.

²⁹¹ *Ipê* is another vernacular name for many different trees, mostly different types of oak.

²⁹² Brazilian viola, not the European instrument belonging to the violin family.

²⁹³ *Imbiruçu* is a tree that produces a flower with an intense sweet smell.

Brazil's natural beauty as backdrop for this story of unrequited love. The text is hard to fully understand, even for a native speaker, due to its heavy use of dated regional expressions.

Table 6-11 “Cabôca de Caxangá”

Cabôca de Caxangá			
Form - Verse-Refrain			
Measure Numbers	Section	Number of Measures	
1 - 4	Intro	4	
5 - 8	A	4	Refrain (m. 9-10 , 2 nd Ending)
11 - 18	B	8	Verse 1 –Solo
19 - 22	A	4	Refrain (m. 23-24 , 2 nd Ending)
25 - 32	B	8	Verse 2 –Solo
33 - 36	A	4	Refrain (m.37-38, 2 nd Ending)
39 - 46	B	8	Verse 3 - Duet
47- 50	A	4	Refrain (m. 51 , 2 nd Ending)
52 - 59	B	8	Verse 4 – Trio
60 - 63	A	4	Refrain (m. 64-65 , 2 nd Ending)
66 - 73	B	8	Verse 5 - Solo
74 - 77	A	4	Refrain (m. 78-79 , 2 nd Ending)
80 - 87	B	8	Verse 6 - Quartet
88 - 91	A	4	Refrain (m. 92-93, 2 nd Ending)
94 - 101	B	8	Verse 7 - Solo
102 - 111	A	10	Refrain – Largo

Key – G Major

Time Signature and tempo markings – 2/4 Un peu modéré (♩= 76) – Largo e Grandioso

Vocal range (Melody) – D4 – D5

According to Tarasti, the same melody was used by Darius Milhaud in his ballet *Le bouef sur le toit* (1920).²⁹⁴ For the refrain, the melody alternates between the *maxixe* rhythm and triplets. For the verses, the vocal line is faster and more syllabic, featuring descending eight-note phrases that contrast with the accompaniment, which for the most part is the accompaniment rhythm associated with the *maxixe*. This specific rhythmic contrast is typical of both the *embolada* and the *chorinho*.

The accompaniment has relatively simple harmony that alternates between the tonic, subdominant and dominant, but with extended chords in a few places. The refrains have very little variation and the accompaniment consists of eighth-note arpeggios in the left hand, while the right hand plays chords marking the *maxixe* rhythm. The accompaniment for the verses, in which the piano is occasionally joined by the choir, is a little more varied:

Verse 1 – *Maxixe* rhythm, no choir

Verse 2 – Same as 1

²⁹⁴Eero Tarasti, *Villa-Lobos: the life and works 1887 – 1959* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1995), 225.

Verse 3 – Very economical and sparse piano accompaniment, with the choir singing a percussive ostinato made up of vocables (patch, tch, patch, tch, patch) that accentuate the *maxixe* rhythm. (Example 6-18)

Verse 4 – Piano playing block seventh chords in triplets, with no choir. (Example 6-19)

Verse 5 – Same piano part as 1, except with the men of the choir singing a single sustained chord in *bocca chiusa*.

Verse 6 – Same as 4

Verse 7 – Same as 5, but with the chord expanded and sang by the full choir.

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Cabôca de Caxangá", Verse 3, measures 38-41. The score is written for Soprano Solo and Contralto Solo. The lyrics are: "Ha munto tempo lá nas moita das ta - quãra juncto ao monte das coi - vara, não te ve-jo tu pas." The piano part features a percussive ostinato of "Patch, tch! Patch, tch! Patch!" repeated three times. The piano part is marked "pp".

Example 6-18 “Cabôca de Caxangá” Verse 3, mm. 38-41.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Chansons typiques brésiliennes: depuis les chants Indiens jusqu'aux chansons populaires du carnaval Carioca/ 10, Caboca de Caxangá: embolada do norte: pour chant à 4 voix et chœur mixte [SATB]/ thème et parole de Catulo Cearense, voice and piano score* (Paris: Editions Max Eschig, 1948), 4.

santa do na - tá na en cru zi. ada, eu ti is pe rei i dis. can - tei in. té o rom pê da ma - nhã! Quando eu

Example 6-19 “Cabôca de Caxangá” Verse 4, mm. 52-55.²⁹⁶

The final refrain is sung by the whole choir in a seven-voice *divisi*, with a much slower *largo* tempo marking, and the piano only answering the choir in octaves, leaving the choir almost entirely *a capella*. The French vanguardist influences are modest in this song, although not as much as in the two previous. The most prominent of these features is how Villa-Lobos uses a rhythmic motif in the accompaniment as the defining characteristic of each verse. Just like in the previous song, the proximity of the composer to the style of the original song might have influenced his decision to keep the harmony closer to the original version.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, 5.

CONCLUSIONS

As shown in Chapter 6, *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* features many of the techniques with which Villa-Lobos became familiar during his trips to Paris in the 1920s. The use of Brazilian musical source material as the central element for the construction of this music is also a feature that helps to place these songs among the compositions written during the Paris years. A critical investigation of his biography shows that the source material for these songs was not necessarily the result of his trips through Brazil during his youth. Although it is possible that some material was collected by the composer himself, many of the sources came to the composer's attention through the research of others, such as Edgar Roquette-Pinto in the case of the Indigenous material. As suggested in Chapter 5, the composer probably only got acquainted with this material after his attention turned towards nationalism during or after his first trip to Paris.

As shown in Chapter 4, it seems clear now that Villa-Lobos's nationalist style developed in the 1920's, in part as a result of his contact with the French vanguard and Igor Stravinsky's music, but also as a response to the expectations of Parisian audiences who wanted to hear exotic-sounding music from a composer from Brazil. The difficulty in understanding this process by which *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* was written comes from Villa-Lobos backdating this and other nationalist works, compounded with his larger-than-life persona and the romanticized and exaggerated biography he created about himself during his first visits to Europe. It appears that he misdated these compositions intentionally, many times using the notion of the "spiritual conception" of the piece as an

excuse to possibly downplay or to deny the influence of the music he heard in Europe had in his own work; or, as Mário de Andrade put it, to become a “pioneer on everything.”²⁹⁷

The composition dates of some of his other nationalist works, such as *Amazonas* or *Uirapuru*, have already been challenged by the current scholarship. As the last two chapters have shown, there is a large body of evidence supporting the possibility that *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* is one of these misdated works and that it was actually composed in the second half of the 1920s, and not in 1919 as claimed by the composer. Establishing the correct dates for these compositions is part of a larger process of demystifying Villa-Lobos life, making his evolution of style much more linear, plausible, and less dependent on the romantic notion that he was predestined to be the father of Brazilian music nationalism and having a nearly supernatural intuition as a composer.

Villa-Lobos was the creator of the first, fully consolidated, Brazilian nationalist style of art music and arguably the most important promoter of Brazilian music during the first half of the twentieth-century. Clarifying the development of his style and the events around it in no way diminishes the importance of the composer, but it gives due credit to the composers, intellectuals and artists involved in this process and allows for a better understanding of his music. *Canções Típicas Brasileiras* remains as a milestone of the Brazilian nationalist art song, but it is not a work dating from the time when Villa-Lobos was composing mostly in a late-romantic and impressionist styles. It is rather an example of his experimentation with the development of a nationalist style during his Paris years.

²⁹⁷ Manuel Negwer, *Villa-Lobos: O Florescimento da Música Brasileira*, trad. Stéfano Paschoal (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009), 110.

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